# HALIFAX DEFENCE COMPLEX VISITOR SURVEYS (1986)

PREPARED BY

SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS SECTION

ENVIRONMENT CANADA PARKS

ATLANTIC REGION

DECEMBER 1987

## BACKGROUND

The Halifax Defence Complex is a series of fortifications which were put in place to defend the Halifax Harbour. The establishment of the Halifax Defence Complex took place as early as the settlement of Halifax and continued on through the Second World War.

There are five sites which make up the Halifax Defence Complex; The Halifax Citadel N.H.P., Prince of Wales Martello Tower N.H.P, York Redoubt N.H.S., Fort McNab N.H.S., George's Island N.H.S.

In terms of visitor access and use, the Halifax Defence Complex sites differ from one another. George's Island N.H.S. at this time is not open to the public, primarily for safety reasons. There are no visitor service facilities on the island.

Fort McNab, located on McNab's Island is accessible by private or charter boat and has only minimum amenities for visitor comfort. There are no visitor facilities or services at the fort although Parks does provide picnic tables and privies near Maugher Beach and Back Cove.

The Halifax Citadel is one of the major attractions in Halifax, attracting more than 300,000 visitors annually. Its location in Halifax makes it highly visible and easily accessible to pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic. Within the Halifax Citadel there are a variety of programs, exhibits and animated events for visitors to enjoy.

Prince of Wales Martello Tower is accessible only by foot and is located within the boundaries of Point Pleasant Park , the city's largest park. The site itself is small and consists of a single martello tower which visitors can enter during operating hours. There are no washroom facilities located in the tower but they are available nearby. Interpretive exhibits are located in the tower. Approximately 15,000 visitors enter the tower each year.

York Redoubt is located outside of the metro area of Halifax making it less accessible than the Halifax Citadel. Visitor facilities include a large parking area within the fort walls, washrooms, numerous trails, an interpretive exhibit in the Fire Command Post and picnic tables at Sleepy Cove near the York Redoubt Battery. Approximately 50,000 visitors enter the fort each year.

## SURVEY OBJECTIVES

During the summer of 1986 visitor surveys were conducted at all of the sites with the exception of George's Island. Halifax Citadel visitors had been surveyed on two previous occasions (1983 and 1977); however, the other sites had not been formally surveyed.

The survey objectives were based upon the information requirements identified by management and operational staff of the Halifax Defence Complex and the Atlantic Regional Office. The objectives for all four sites were:

- to develop comprehensive user profiles of summer visitors;
- to determine levels of use of selected facilities and areas during the peak visitor season;
- to determine how well the needs of visitors are being met;
- to obtain visitor's opinions on existing park facilities and services; and
- to collect background data which will provide the means of assessing the impact of planning options on the local residents and visitors.

In addition to the above objectives, the 1986 Halifax Citadel survey was designed as a replica of the 1983 survey specifically to assess the changes which have occurred with respect to visitor use of the park since the imposition of entrance fees.

The survey methods are presented in a separate document entitled Halifax Defence Complex Visitor Study 1986 Planning Report (Socio-Economic Analysis, Parks, Atlantic Region, 1985).

## SCOPE OF REPORT

This report presents the highlights of the visitor surveys conducted at the Fort McNab, Prince of Wales Martello Tower and York Redoubt during 1986. The Halifax Citadel survey results are presented in Park Visitation Before and After an Entry Fee - The Experience of the Halifax Citadel National Historic Park .(Harvey, Dr. Andrew. 1986).

Since this is a summary report, detailed breakdowns and crosstabulations of the variables have not been conducted. It is expected that as the need arises in the planning and marketing processes to follow that this data base will be used to provide more detailed information. These data sets are available in either SPSS or SAS PC format and will operate in a DOS environment.

The summary data have been presented in separate sections for each park or site. Each section begins by providing profile characteristics of the visitors followed by information on how visitors learned of the site and what they did upon their arrival at the site.

# FORT MCNAB NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

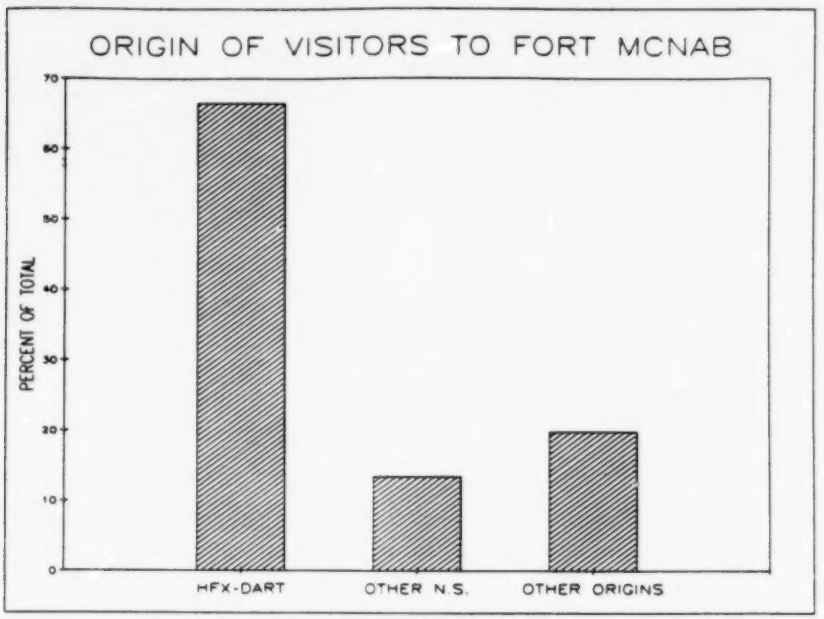
## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

## FORT MCNAB N.H.S. VISITOR USE SUMMARY

Fort McNab has greater visitor use potential than is currently realized. Few of its visitors are tourists to the area and those who are tourists arrive at the park with friends or family. This suggests that access and lack of awareness are major factors in the relatively low levels of visitation this site receives. It is difficult to imagine that tourists to the area would not be interested in visiting an island within such close proximity to Halifax given the generally high levels of interest among tourist to visit historic attractions in metro areas.

Also of particular concern is the current void in elderly visitors to the site. The aging tourist market, bus tours and cruise ships all require better access than is presently available on the island if this market segment is to be viewed with the objective of expansion.

***FIGURE 1***




**During the survey period most of the visitors were from Halifax- Dartmouth. Families with children and groups of friends accounted for 66.5 per cent of the visitors to the fort.**

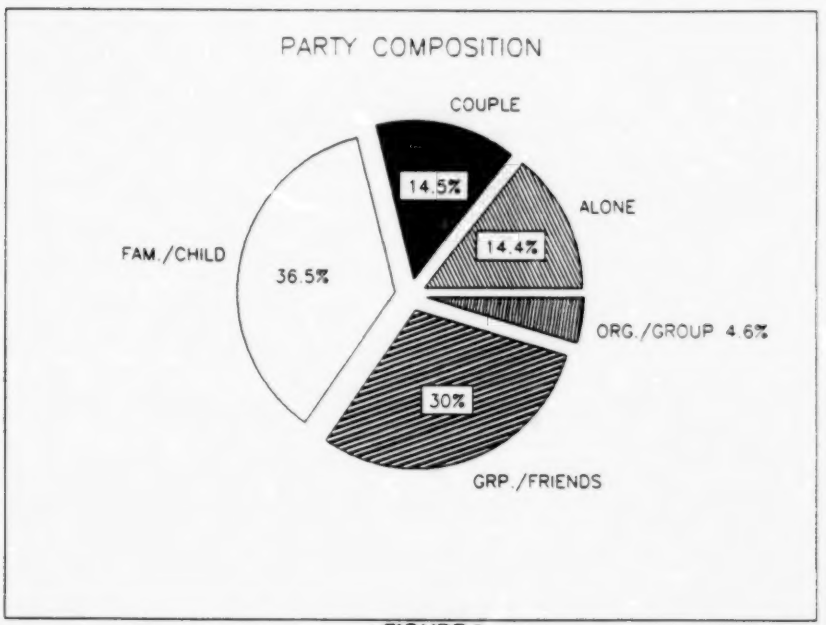
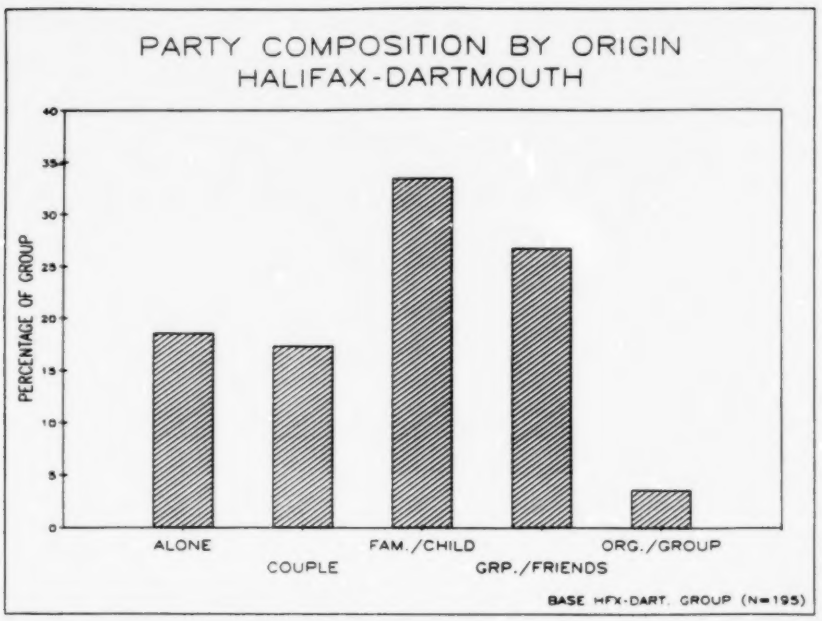



***FIGURE 2***

**FIGURE 3**




Figures 3, 4 and 5 compare the composition of parties from the three origin groups. For Nova Scotia origins, Families with children predominate. This differs substantially from out of province visitors where most visit the fort with friends or relatives.

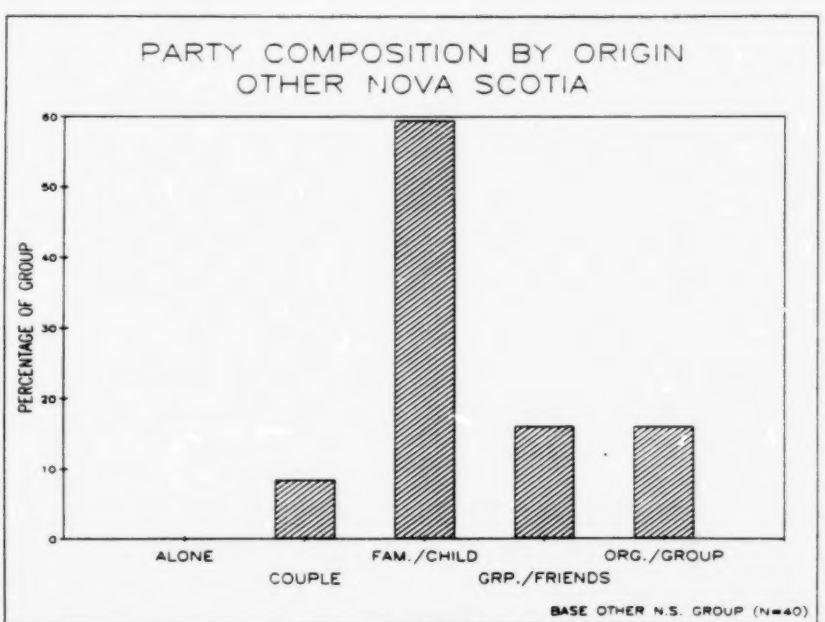



**FIGURE 4**

*FIGURE 5*

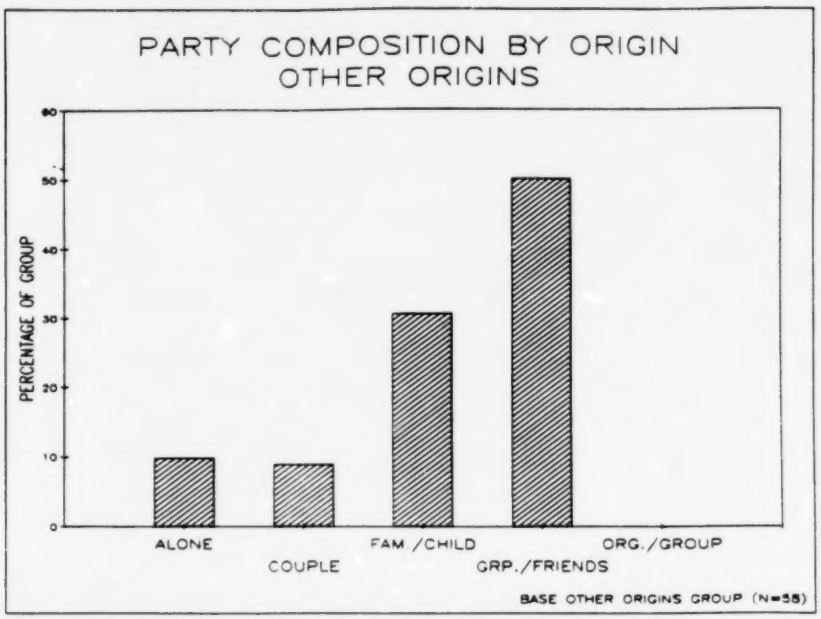



Figure 6 shows that most of the visitors are between 13 and 35 years of age (66.8 %). Those over 65 years of age comprise 2.1 per cent of the visitors to Fort McNab. The low percentage of senior citizens is not typical of historic parks and is likely related to accessibility of this site.

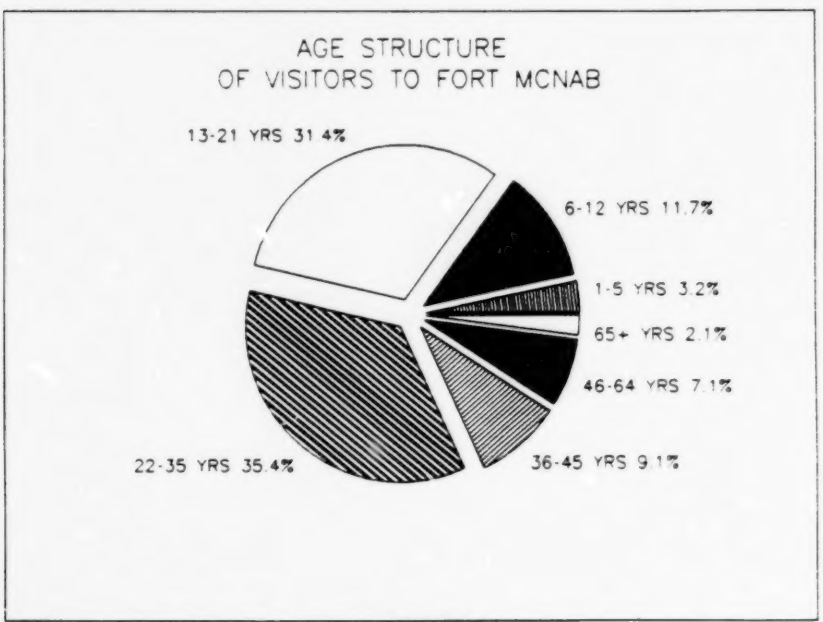



*FIGURE 6*

*FIGURE 7*

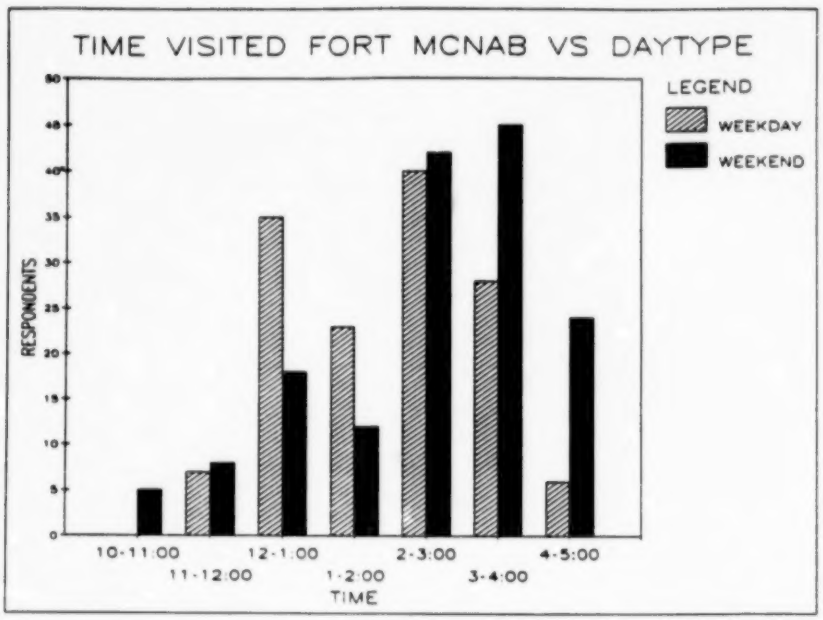



**Figure 8 shows the average number of parties visiting by weekend day or weekday. There is no statistically significant difference between weekend and weekday use.**

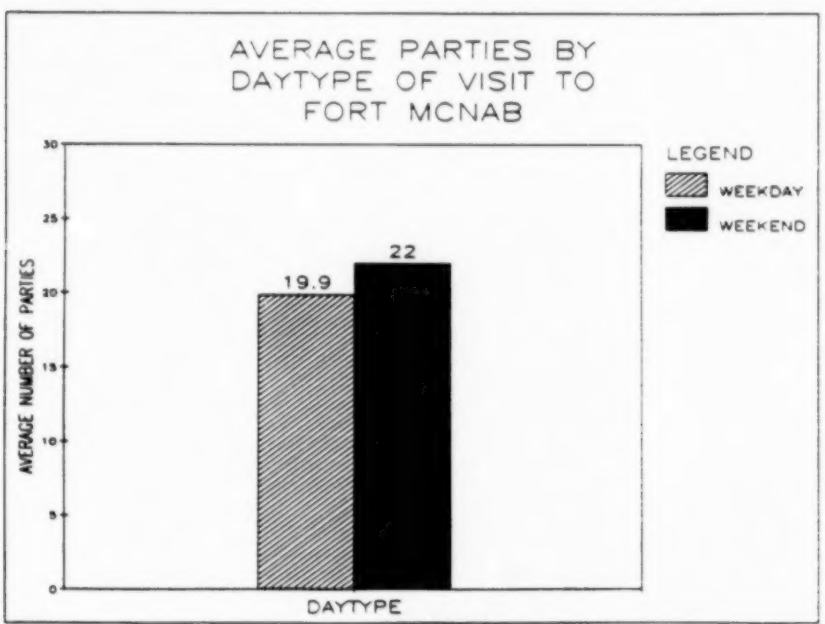



*FIGURE 8*

*FIGURE 9*

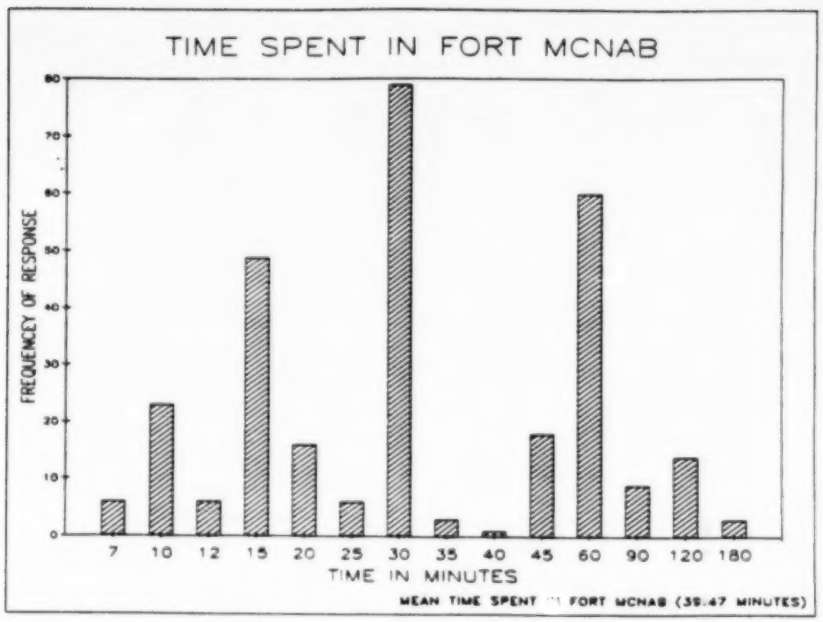



Figure 9 illustrates the distribution of length of stay for all parties visiting Fort McNab. The average length of time spent at the Fort was just under 40 minutes. Figure 10 indicates the relative importance of the visit to Fort McNab to the parties' overall trip. For the majority of visitors it was considered one of several planned stops.

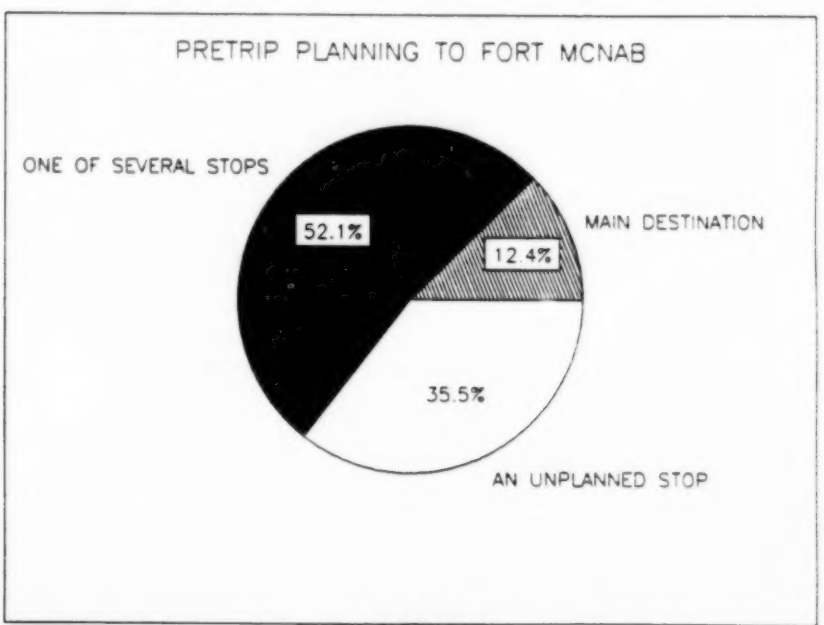



*FIGURE 10*

*FIGURE 11*

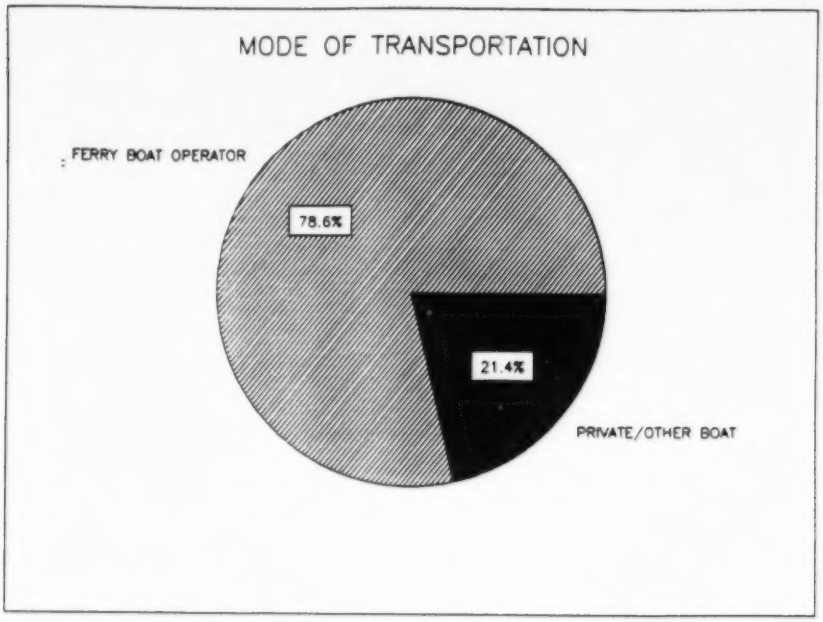



Figure 12 shows how many of the first time visitors to Fort McNab are first time visitors to the Island. The smaller pie chart to the right is a subset of the shaded area of the larger pie chart. Almost 70% of the visitors were making their first visit to Fort Mcnab. Of the first time visitors 15% had been on the island before without visiting the Fort.

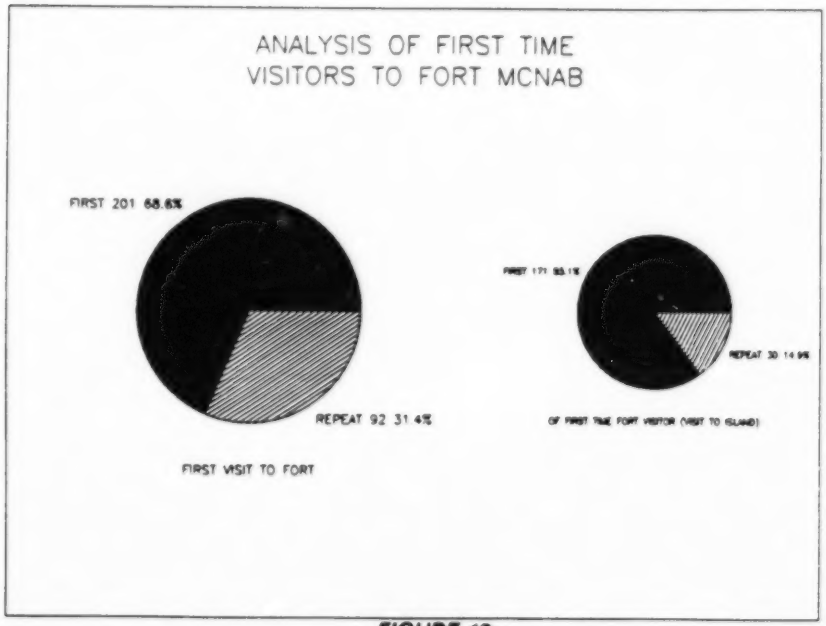
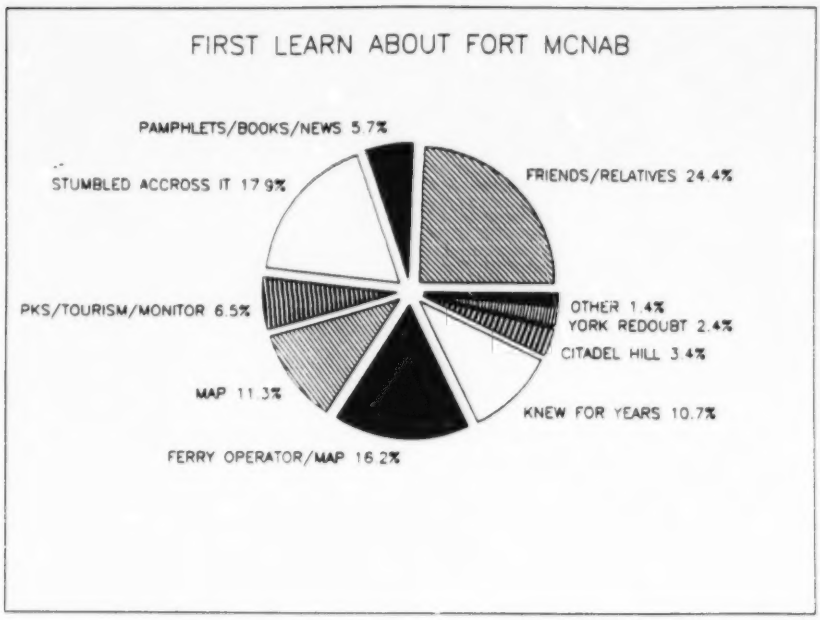



*FIGURE 12*

*FIGURE 13*




Friends and relatives (24.4 %) and accidental discovery (17.9 %) were the most common means of finding out about Fort McNab. This could suggest a deficiency in our current promotion reach related to this park. Figure 14 shows that local residents have a higher propensity for repeat visitation while out-of-province visitors have virtually none.

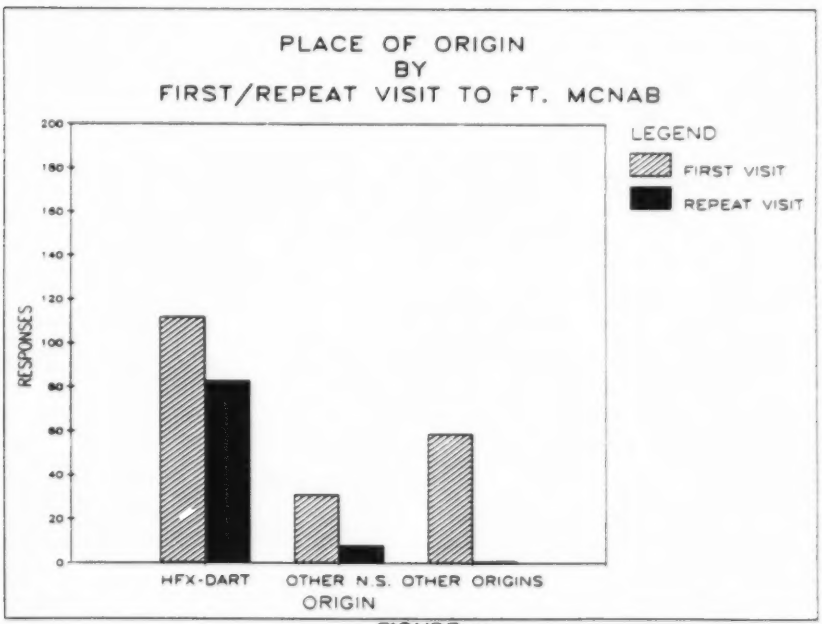
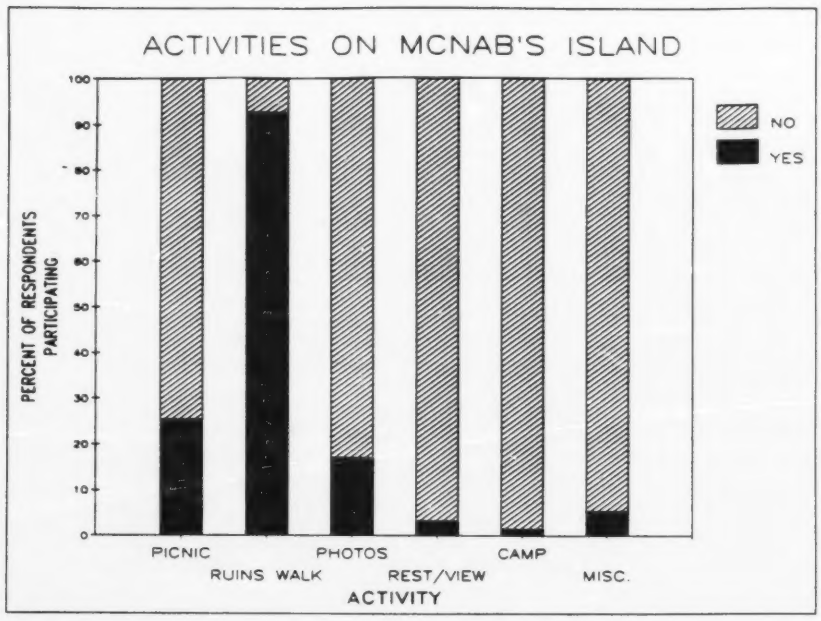



*FIGURE 14*

*FIGURE 15*




**Walking about the ruins is by far the most significant activity at Fort McNAb. With the exception of 20 local parties (less than 10 % of the visitors) all visitors explored the ruins.**

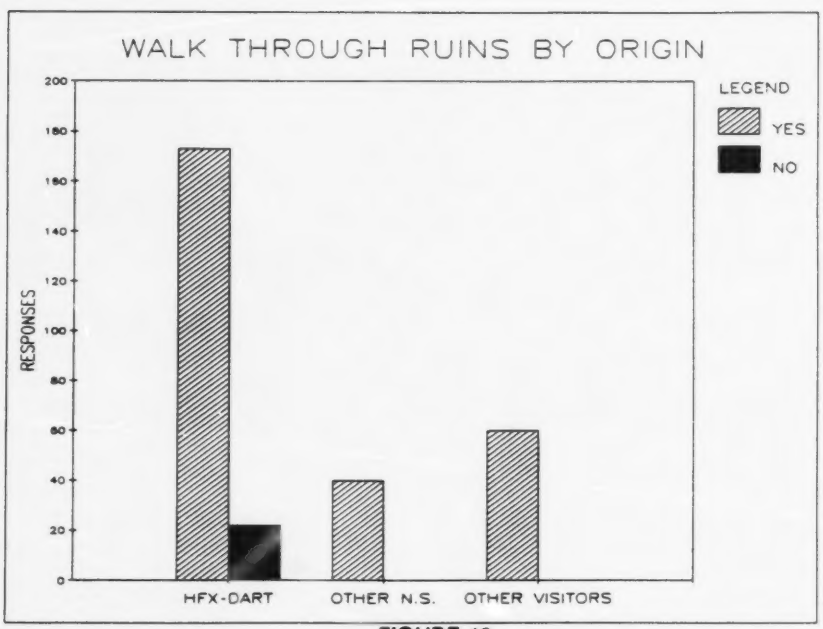
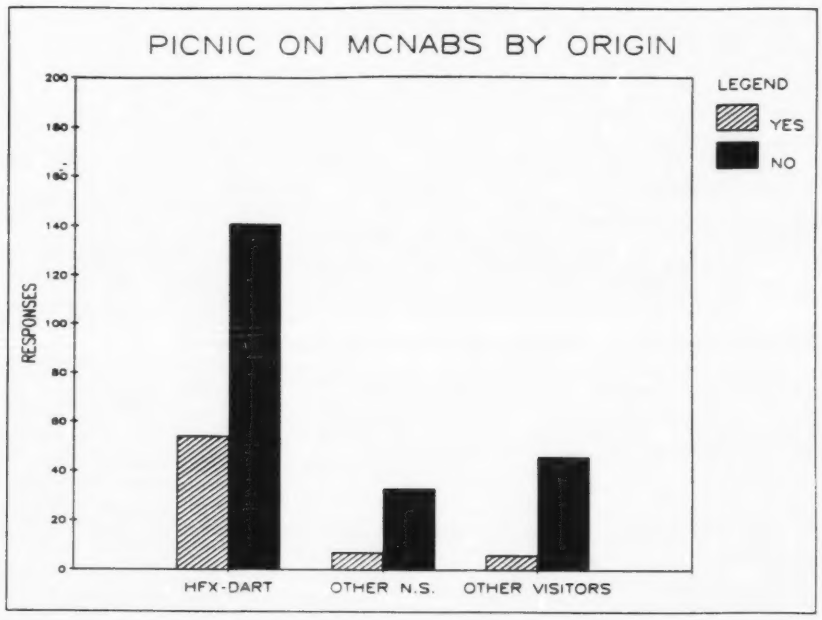



*FIGURE 16*

***FIGURE 17***


PICNIC ON MCNABS BY ORIGIN
LEGEND
YES
NO
RESPONSES
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
HFX-DART
OTHER N.S.
OTHER VISITORS

# FORT MCNAB

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **NO COMMENTS** | 3 |

**FAVOURABLE COMMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Good As Is | 2 |

**FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Major Restoration Required | 22 |
| Clean It Up | 16 |
| Washrooms Required | 9 |
| Picnic Tables | 7 |
| More Garbage Cans Needed | 5 |
| Cut Grass/Bushes | 5 |
| Fresh Running Water Required | 4 |
| Repairs are Necessary | 4 |
| Make It Safe | 4 |
| Food Outlet Needed | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Cut Trees and Brush | 2 |
| Benches Needed | 2 |
| Cars Should be available on Island | 2 |
| Lights required in Tunnel | 2 |
| Put in Campground | 2 |
| Remove 20th Century Buildings | 1 |
| Put in Steps | 1 |
| Put in Paths | 1 |
| More Historic Exhibits are Needed | 1 |
| Craft Boutiques | 1 |
| Repair Stairways | 1 |
| Provide Transportation to Fort | 1 |
| Put in Guns | 1 |
| Open Tunnels | 1 |
| Bicycle Paths Needed | 1 |
| Repair Handrailings | 1 |
| Show Films | 1 |

**INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION**

| | |
|---|---|
| Information Signs Needed | 19 |
| Direction Signs Needed | 6 |
| Guides Needed | 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| More Information on Fort | 3 |
| Danger Signs Should be Erected | 3 |
| Map Showing Historical Points | 3 |
| Information Booth | 2 |
| Brochures are Required | 2 |
| Advertise the Site | 1 |
| More Markings on Each Building | 1 |
| Have Guided Tours | 1 |

# PRINCE OF WALES MARTELLO TOWER

# NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK

# VISITOR SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

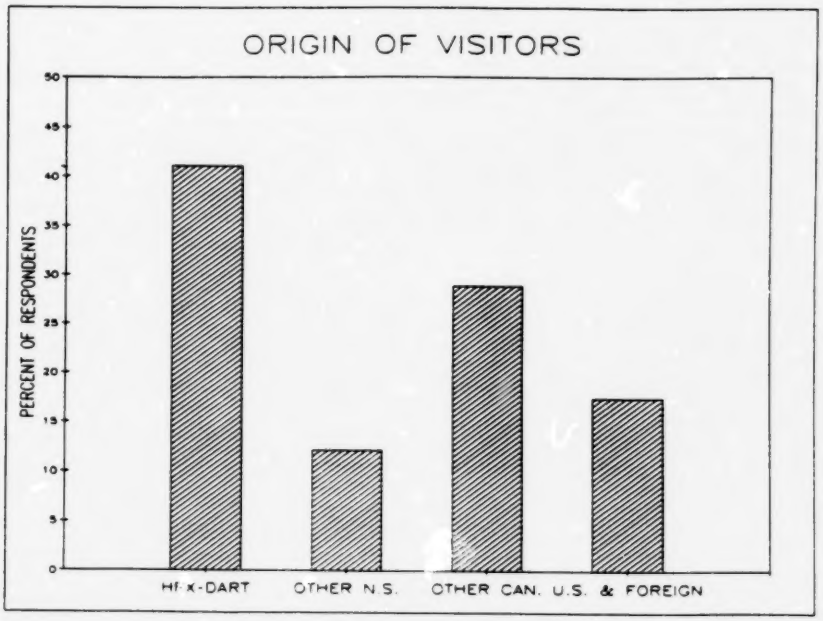
**PRINCE OF WALES MARTELLO TOWER N.H.P.**

**SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS**

For many of the visitors to the Prince of Wales Martello tower, their visit was the result of their visit to Point Pleasant Park. The Tower is well known by local visitors and was almost completely unknown by non-local visitors. Only 29 per cent of the visitors had been in the Tower previously even though over 40 per cent were from the local area.

These survey data indicate that the Tower is a complimentary attraction to Point Pleasant Park. The tower served as a main destination for fewer than 8 per cent of the visitors.

*FIGURE 18*




**Most of the visitors to Prince of Wales are from outside the local area (59 %), and as would be expected most are also first time visitors (71 %).**

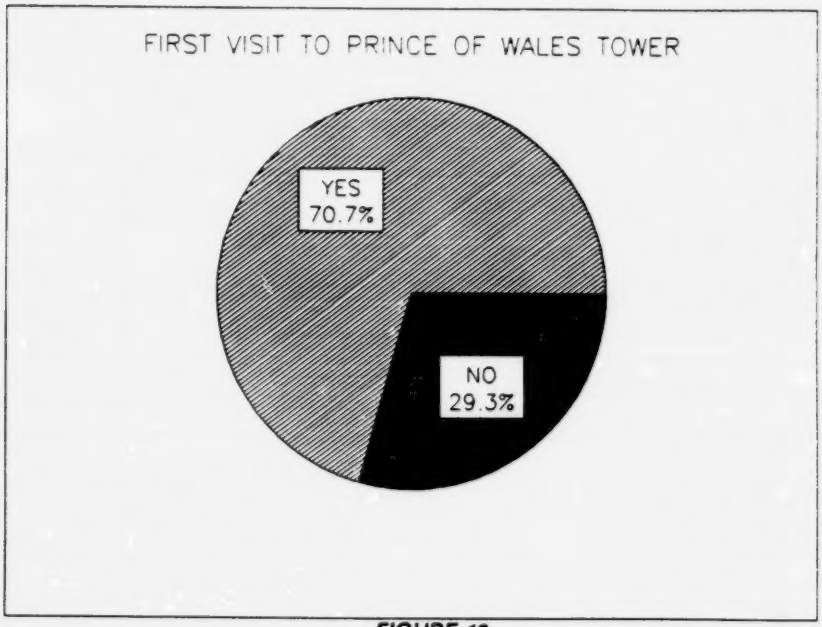
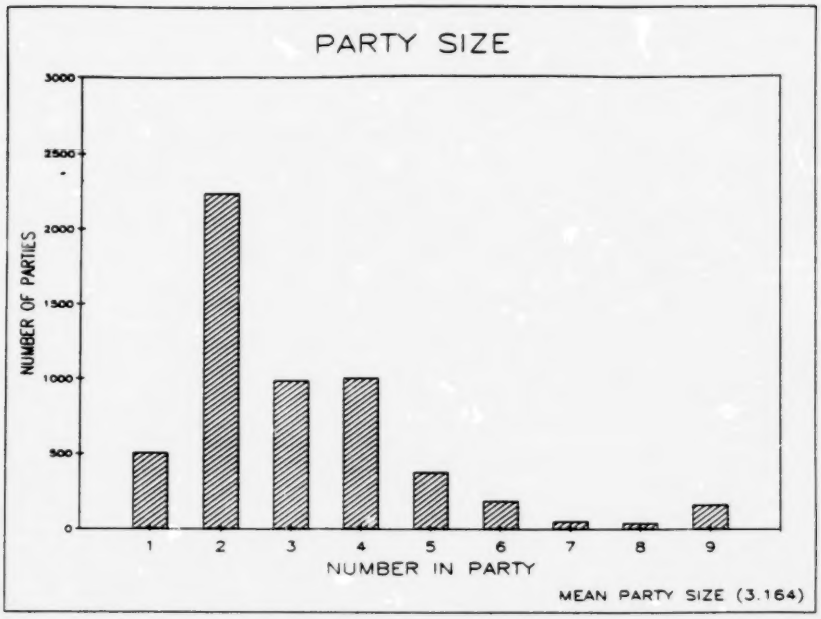



*FIGURE 19*

*FIGURE 20*




**Visitors from the local area had the largest average party size. This is likely due to a large number of locals visiting the park with friends and relatives which would skew the average party size upwards.**

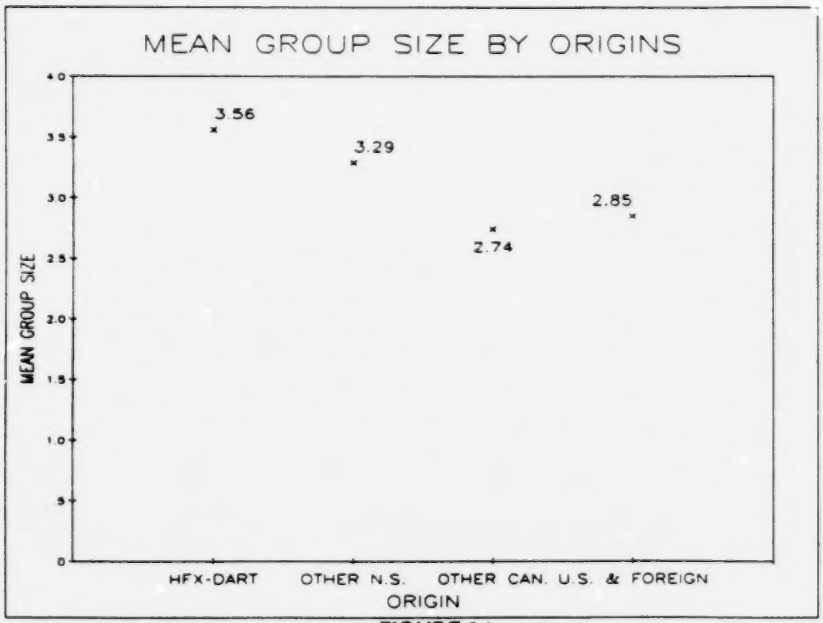
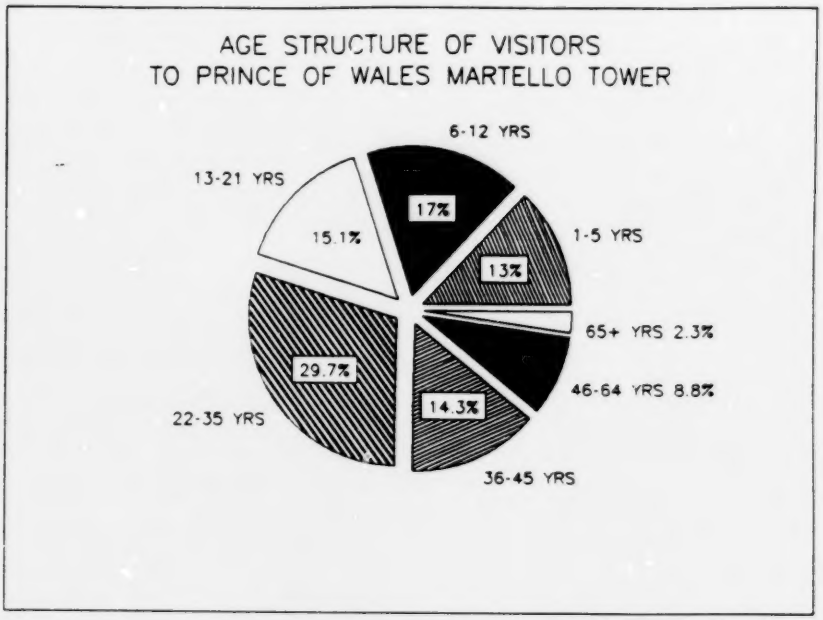



*FIGURE 21*

**FIGURE 22**




**Almost 75 per cent of the visitors to Prince of Wales are under the age of 35. Families with children represent the single largest party composition accounting for 45 per cent of the visitors.**

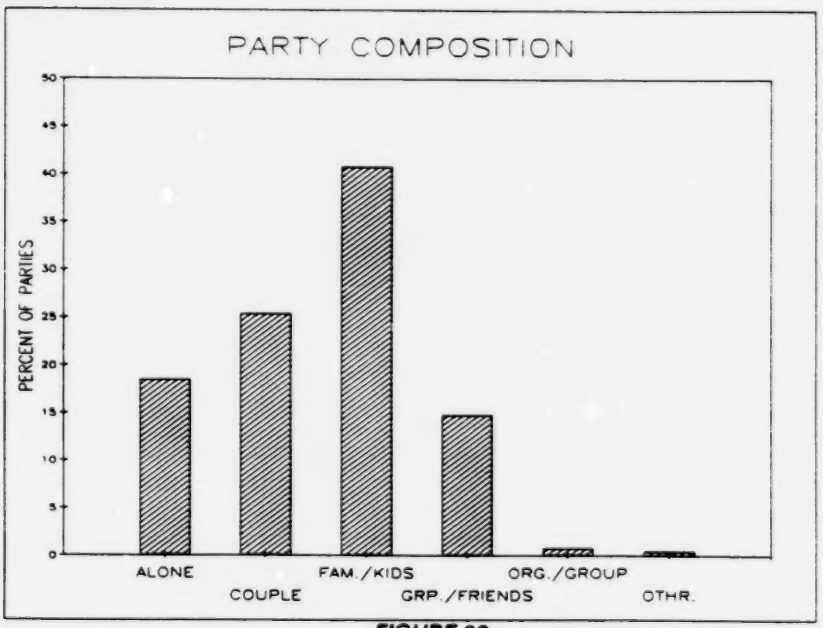
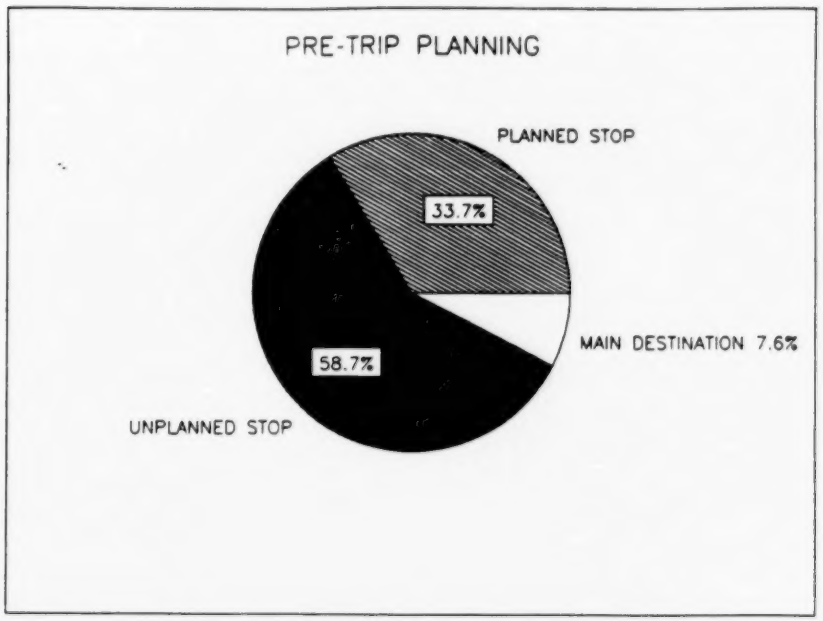



**FIGURE 23**

*FIGURE 24*




Prince of Wales was a main destination for less than 8 per cent of the visitors. As noted in Figure 30 a large number of the visitors were out strolling in Point Pleasant Park and just happened to notice the tower.

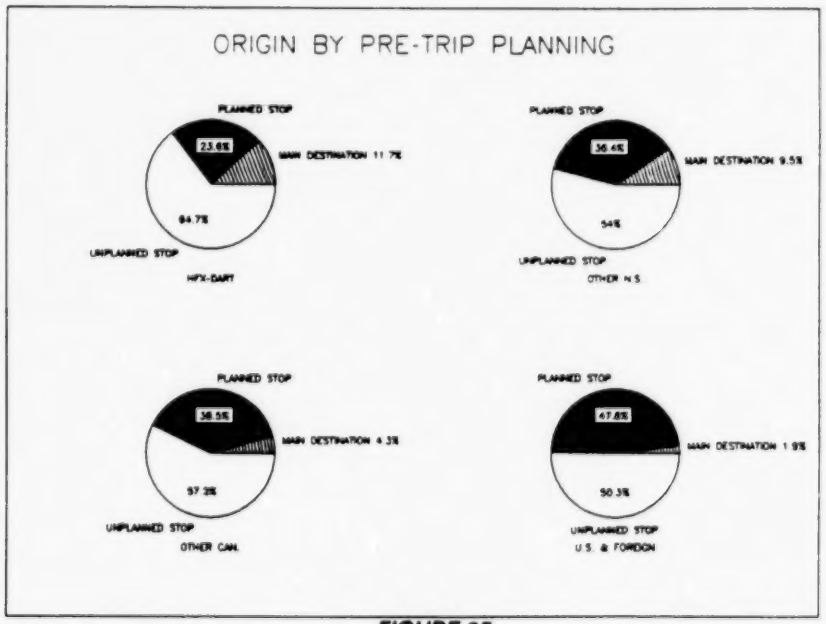



*FIGURE 25*

**FIGURE 26**

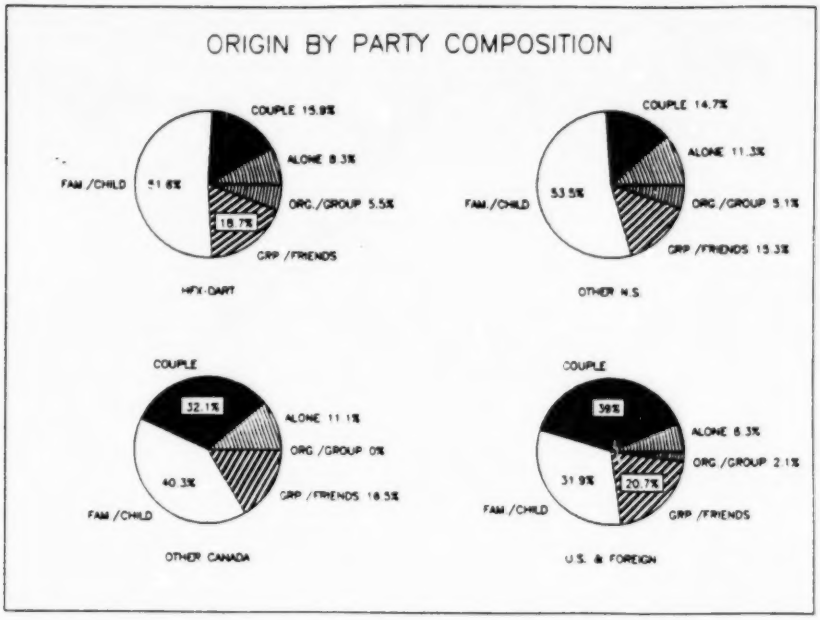



Figure 26 illustrates the difference in party composition by origin. Out-of-province visitors tended to travel as couples to the park to a greater extent than those from within the province. Families were the primary group of Nova Scotia visitors.

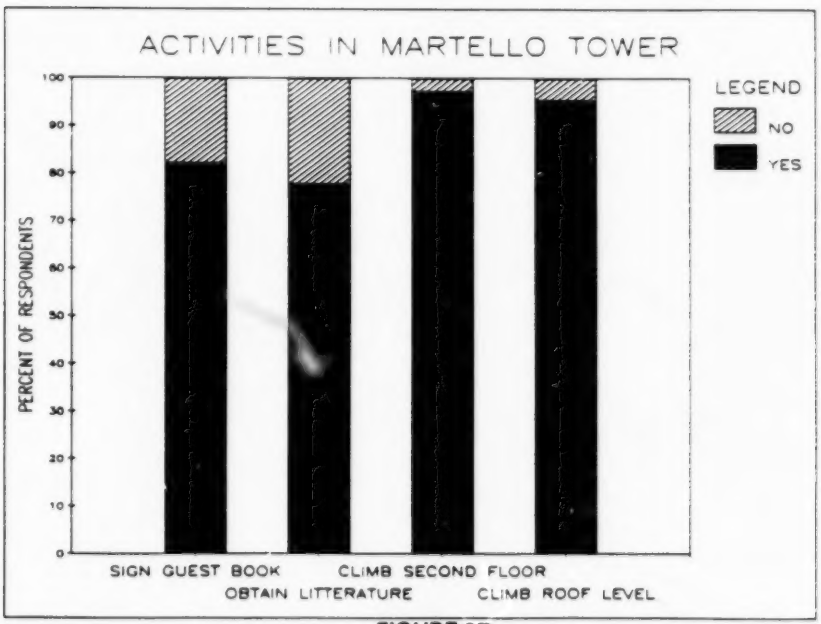
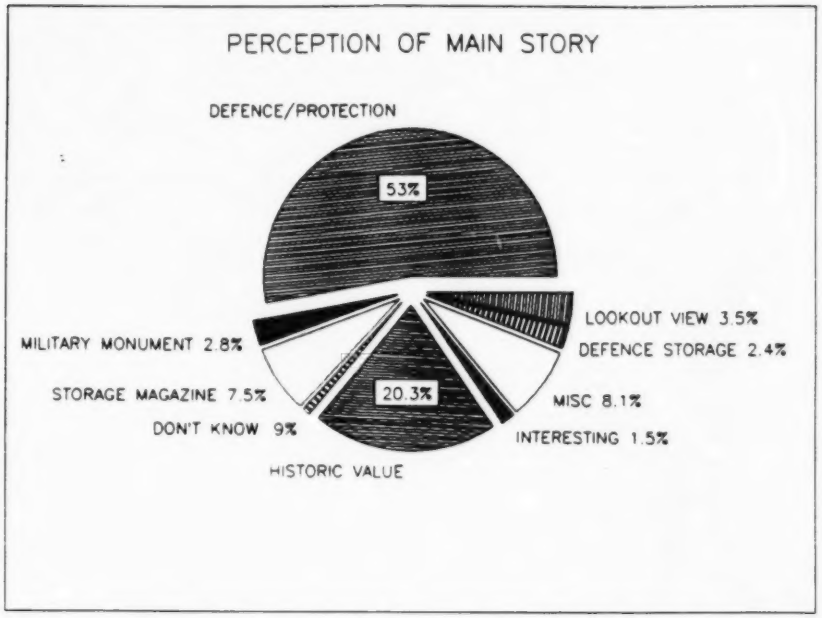



**FIGURE 27**

*FIGURE 28*




When asked what they thought the main story was in the exhibit, the majority indicated it was defence and protection of the harbour.

Figure 29 below shows that Tower Road was the main point of entry in Point Pleasant Park for Prince of Wales visitors.

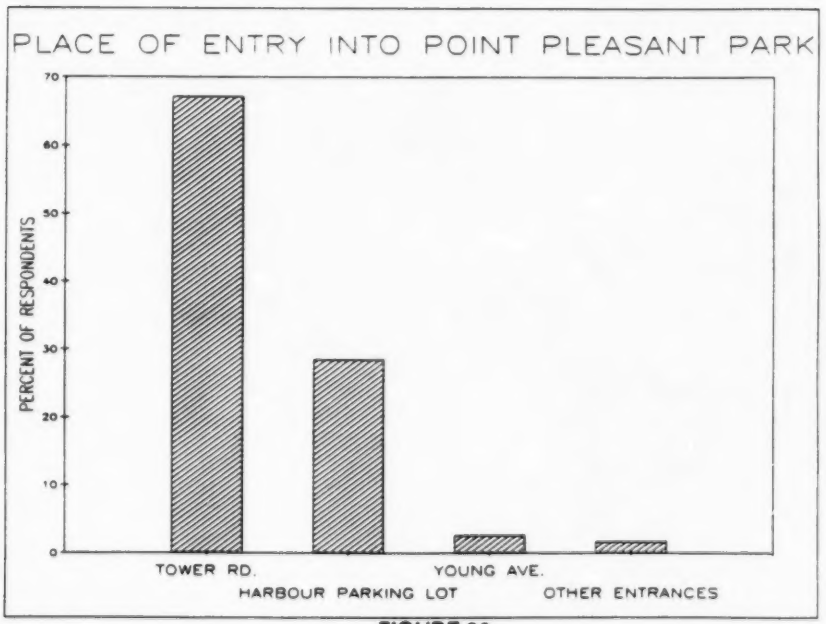
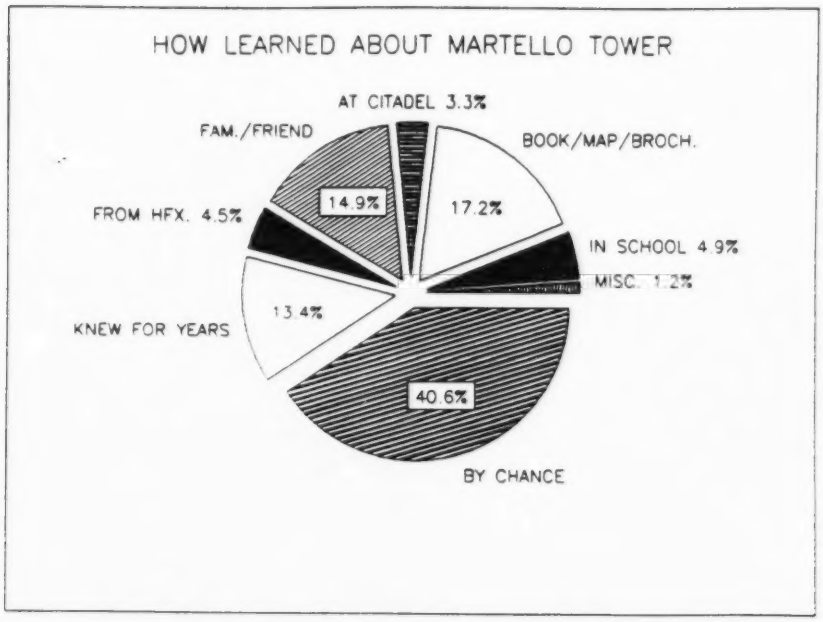



*FIGURE 29*

*FIGURE 30*




The two major information sources for learning about the park were tourist literature (17.2 %) and family and friends (14.9 %). Slightly more than 40 per cent of the visitors stumbled across the tower while in Point Pleasant Park. Figure 31 shows that weekend days receive almost twice the visitation that weekdays do.

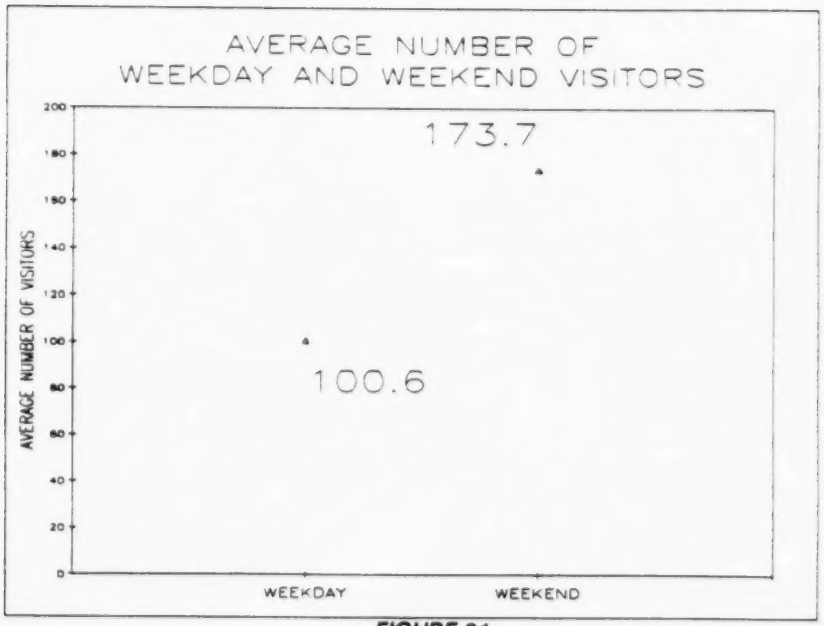
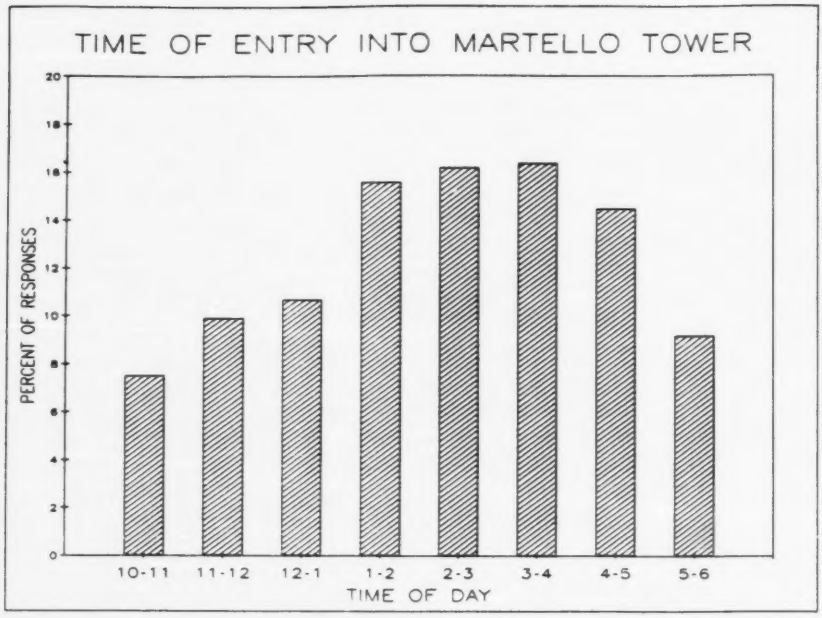



*FIGURE 31*

**FIGURE 32**



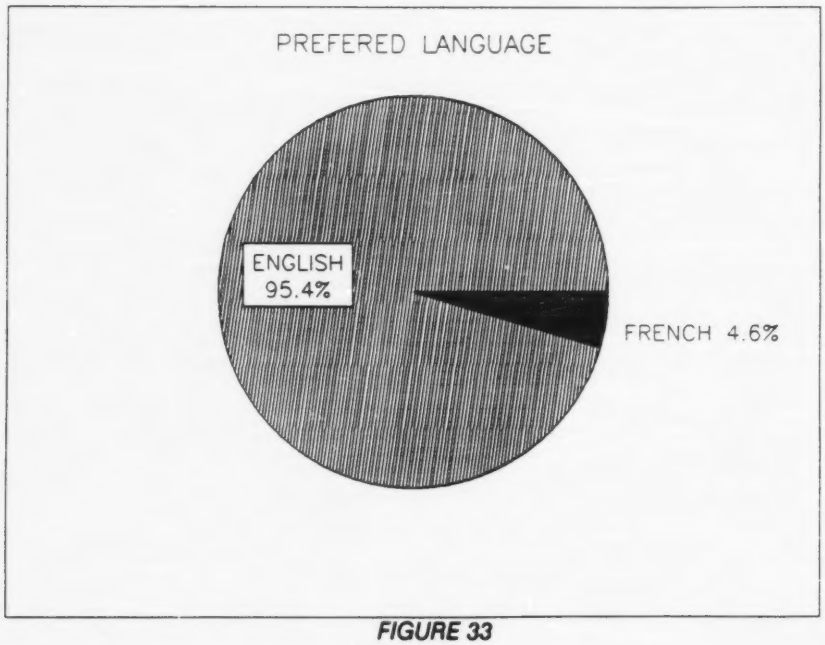




**FIGURE 33**

*FIGURE 34*

Almost half of the visitors had contact with park staff while in the tower. The percentage of visitors consulting with park staff increases for non-local visitors, as would be expected.

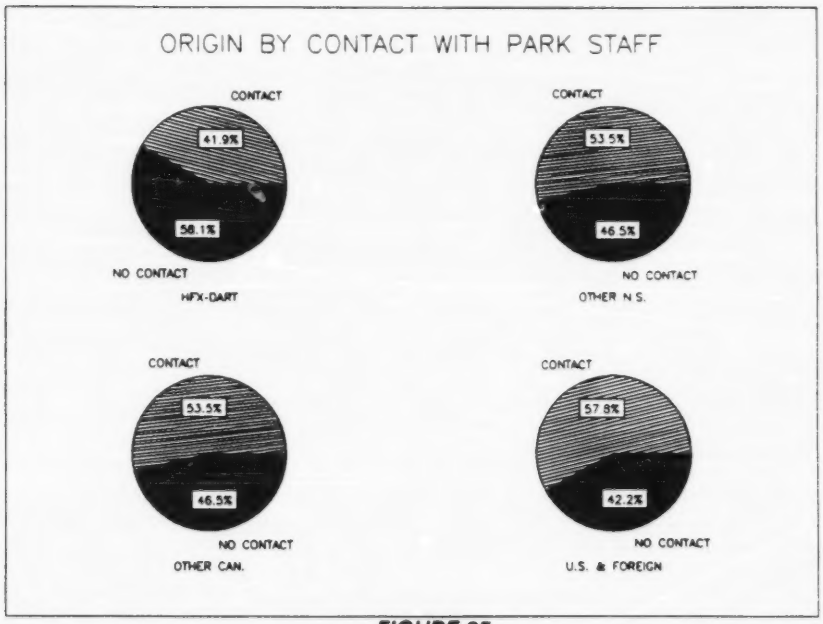



*FIGURE 35*

# PRINCE OF WALES

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **NO COMMENTS** | 16 |

**FAVOURABLE COMMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Good As Is | 86 |
| Well Maintained | 3 |

**FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Put Cannon On Roof-Show How They Were Used | 42 |
| More Artifacts Should be displayed | 31 |
| Clear Trees Obstructs Harbour View | 18 |
| Get Rid of Smell | 14 |
| More Cannons Needed | 13 |
| Period Costumes | 9 |
| Aminated Films | 7 |
| Beds on 2nd Floor to Show How Soldiers Lived | 6 |
| Fence Along Ruins | 5 |
| Serve Refreshments | 5 |

| | |
|---|---|
| More Restoration Required | 5 |
| Facilities for Handicapped | 5 |
| Stairway Made Wider | 4 |
| More Lighting | 4 |
| Make 2nd Floor a Museum | 4 |
| Put Steps on Roof to see Above Guardrail | 3 |
| Update Washrooms | 3 |
| Bleacher to See Over Walls | 3 |
| Statues of Soldiers | 2 |
| Tea Room on Roof | 2 |
| Lanterns Better than Electricity | 2 |
| Restore Barracks | 2 |
| Replace Roof | 2 |
| More Trail Markers | 1 |
| More Points of Entry | 1 |
| Leave Roof Open Until Six | 1 |
| Handrail on First Stairwell | 1 |
| Stairwell Not Lit and Too Steep | 1 |
| Exit From 2nd Floor | 1 |
| Water Tap Required | 1 |
| Parking Lot Closer for Elderly | 1 |
| Fix Up Windows | 1 |
| Donation Box at Desk | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| More Ventilation | 1 |
| Write-up of Duke of Kent | 1 |

**INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS**

| | |
|---|---|
| More Advertising Needed | 11 |
| More Information at Parking Lot | 10 |
| Signs Required | 9 |
| More Information in general is Required | 6 |
| Map Needed at Parking Lot | 6 |
| More Information on Incidents | 4 |
| Guided Tours | 3 |
| More Information on Life at Fort | 3 |
| More Detailed Information on Each Tower Renovation | 2 |
| Open Year Round | 1 |
| Sign Saying "Admission Free" | 1 |
| Operating Hours Sign | 1 |
| More Pictures, Visual Aids | 1 |
| More Trail Markers in Park | 1 |
| More Information on Brick Itself | 1 |
| Open for Longer Periods | 1 |

# YORK REDOUBT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

## YORK REDOUBT N. H. S. VISITOR USE SUMMARY

Most of the visitors to York Redoubt fall into one of three categories; 1) tourist parties visiting the site who are staying with friends or relatives in Halifax; 2) tourists who are visiting the park and are staying in commercial accommodation in Halifax; and, 3) visitors who reside permanently in the Halifax area.

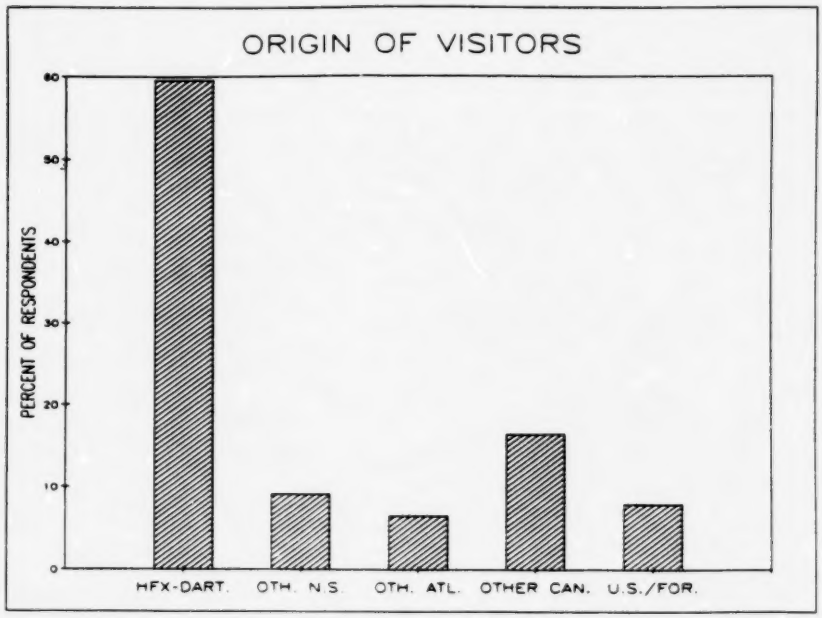
Tourist parties visiting the site with friends and family are an under-exploited market. There is an increased interest among travellers in general to take in historic attractions in metro areas. The challenge is to stimulate their interest in visiting the site with their friends and family. Tourist literature sources are not used extensively by these tourists (6 %) since most of the information and planning of activities is influenced by the people they are staying with. Since these tourist parties stay an average of 6.5 nights in the Halifax area they can potentially accommodate a greater number of activities during their stay than those staying in commercial accommodation who stay an average of only 3 nights. Further analysis will reveal the types of activities which this segment has a propensity to take part in as well as the most appropriate media. These groups are heavy users of the site's interpretive facilities, hence making them an ideal target group.

Tourists staying in commercial accommodation visit the site primarily for historical interpretive reasons. Most of these tourists (52.2 %) found out about York Redoubt when they saw the road sign, and 30 per cent learned of the site from tourist literature. The short average length of stay in Halifax represents a challenge to increasing the penetration from this segment.There are many competing opportunities for which the time in the area must be allocated. However, the current capture rate represents an extremely small share of the tourists visiting Halifax. This group represents about 25 per cent of the site's visitors.

People from the local area form the majority of site visitors (60 %). The local visitors tend to be repeat users of the facilities and generally participate less in the historical interpretive opportunities than non-local visitors. Within the local visitor segment there is an unusually large number of visitors to the site who visit on their own (almost 20 % of the local visitors). This segment will be the most difficult to reach given that people tend not to visit attractions on their own doorstep because they feel the opportunity is always there or they anticipate visiting with friends and family.

During the survey period 12,582 visitors entered the site representing 4343 parties. The reader should note that graphs on the following pages refer to parties or visitors, depending on which is the appropriate base. It is also important to note whether the graph is showing percentage values or actual values.

*FIGURE 36*




Almost 60 % of the visitors to York Redoubt are from the local area indicating the sites importance as a local leisure area. Adults over the age of 45 make up only 17 % of visitation. Figure 38 indicates that families with children are the major party type visiting the site.

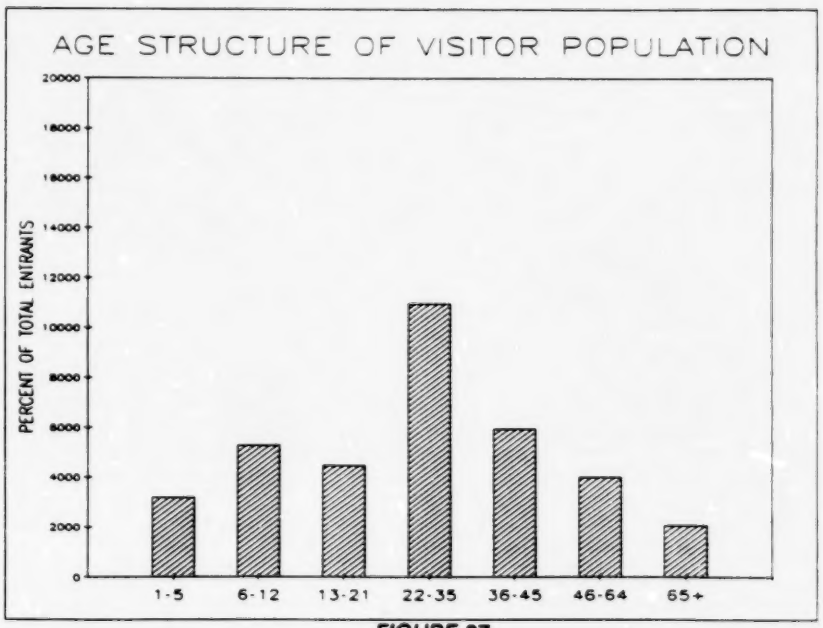
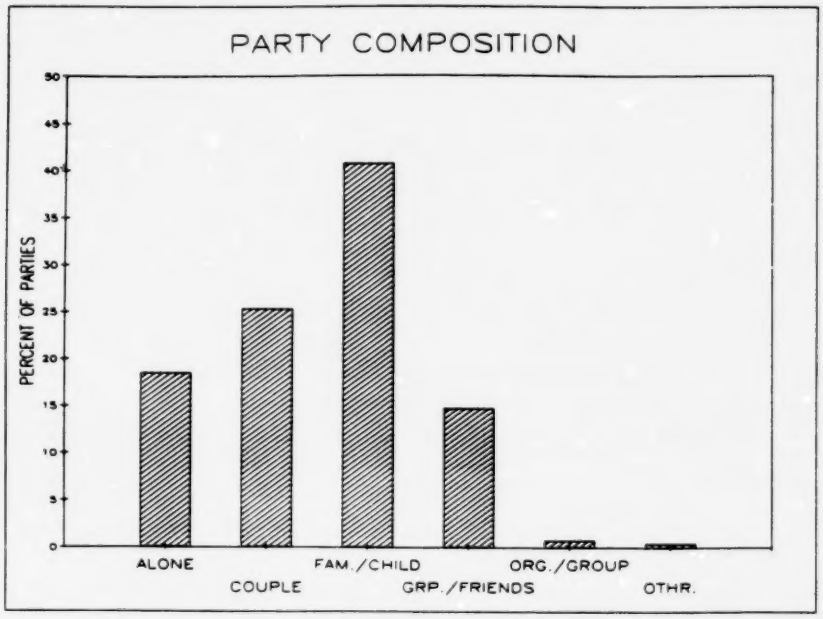



*FIGURE 37*

*FIGURE 38*




**The average party size of York Redoubt visitors is 2.897. The unusually large number of people visiting alone tends to reduce the average party size. The distribution of the number of people in each party is shown below.**

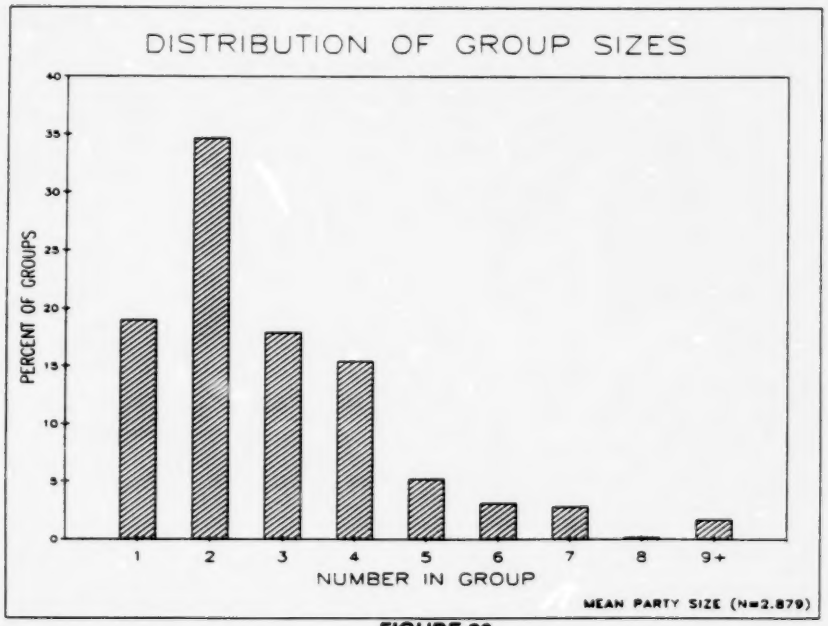



*FIGURE 39*

**FIGURE 40**

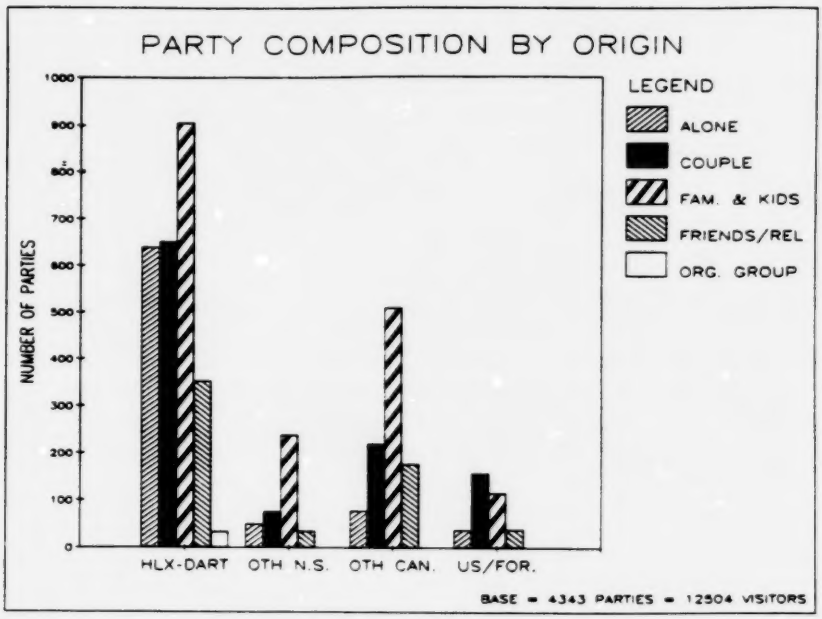
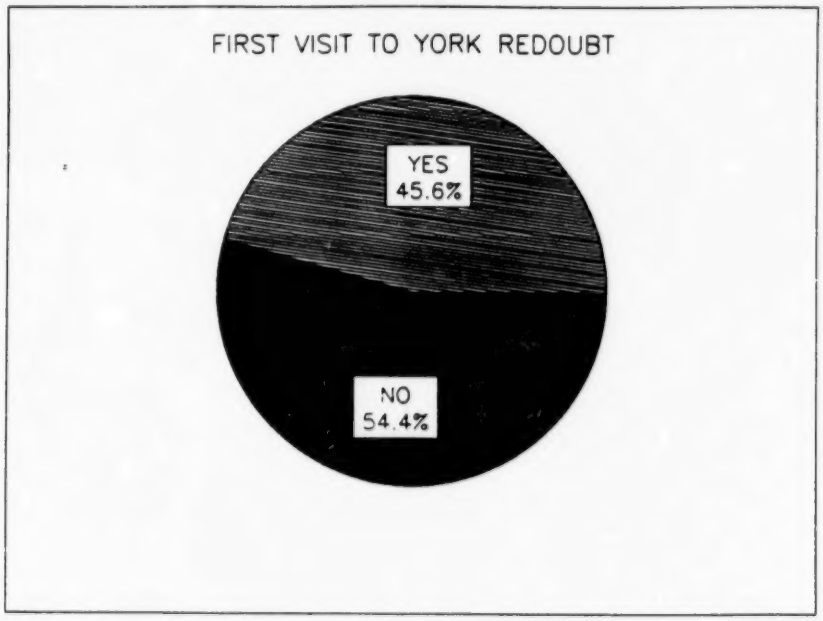

PARTY COMPOSITION BY ORIGIN
NUMBER OF PARTIES
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
HLX-DART
OTH N.S.
OTH CAN.
US/FOR.
LEGEND
ALONE
COUPLE
FAM. & KIDS
FRIENDS/REL
ORG. GROUP
BASE = 4343 PARTIES = 12504 VISITORS

**FIGURE 41**



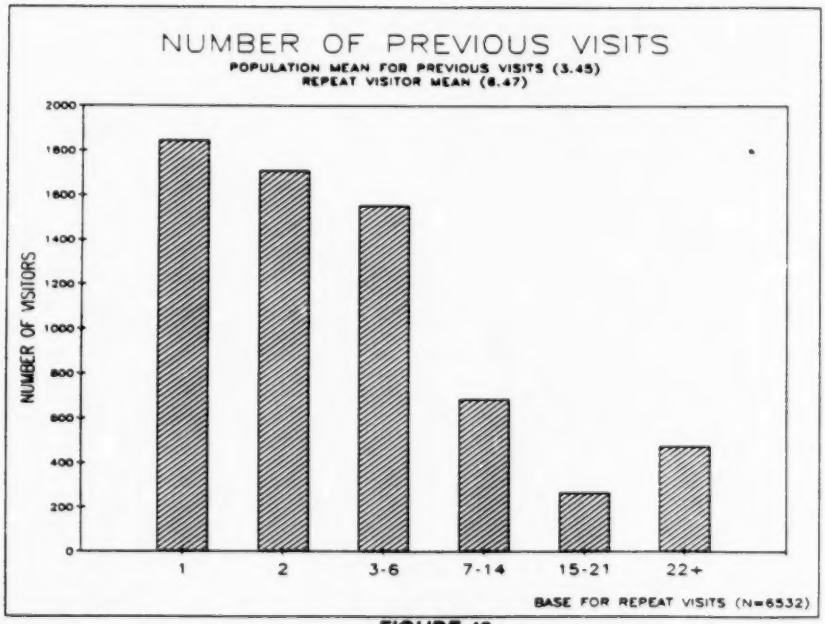




**FIGURE 42**

**FIGURE 43**

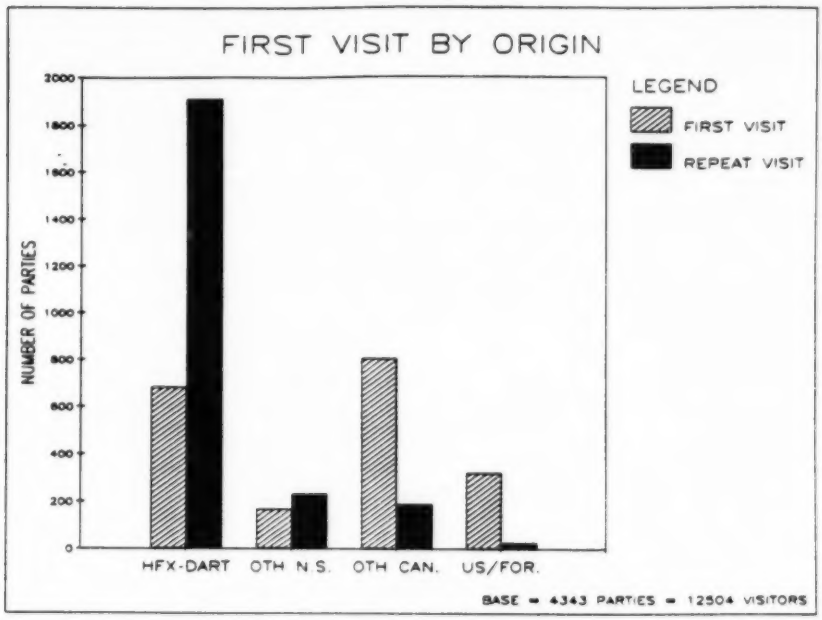
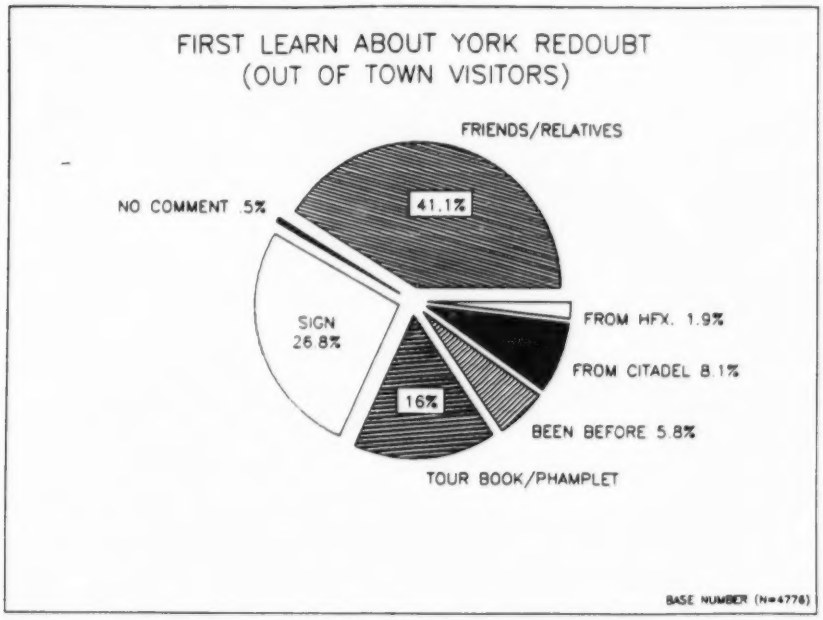

FIRST VISIT BY ORIGIN
LEGEND
FIRST VISIT
REPEAT VISIT
NUMBER OF PARTIES
2000
1800
1600
1400
1200
1000
800
600
400
200
0
HFX-DART
OTH N.S.
OTH CAN.
US/FOR.
BASE = 4343 PARTIES = 12504 VISITORS

**FIGURE 44**




Most out-of-town visitors learned of York Redcubt from friends or family (41.1 %) or by seeing the sign while driving around the area. For Canadian visitors from outside of Nova Scotia, friends or family was the single largest information source (44.9%). For American visitors, seeing the sign (37.6 %) and tourist literature (32.7 %) were the main information sources.

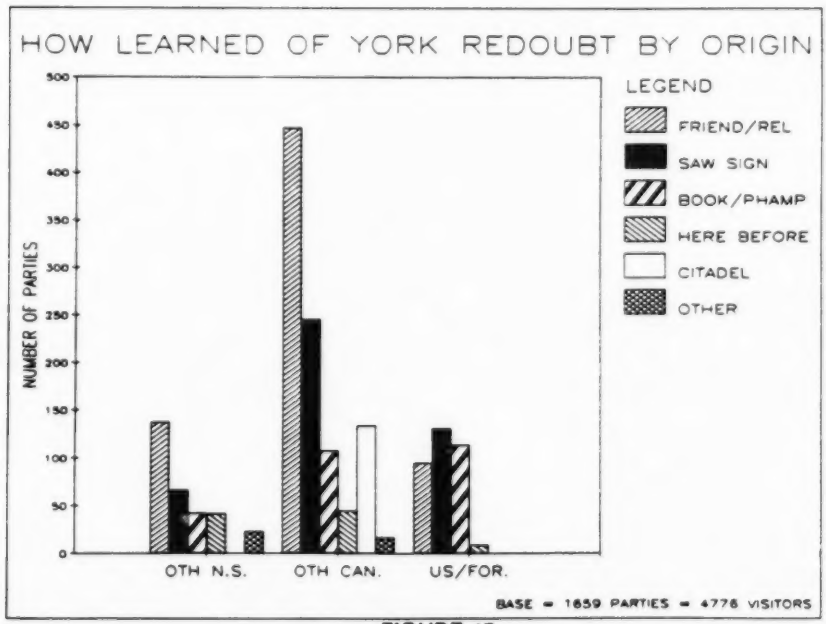
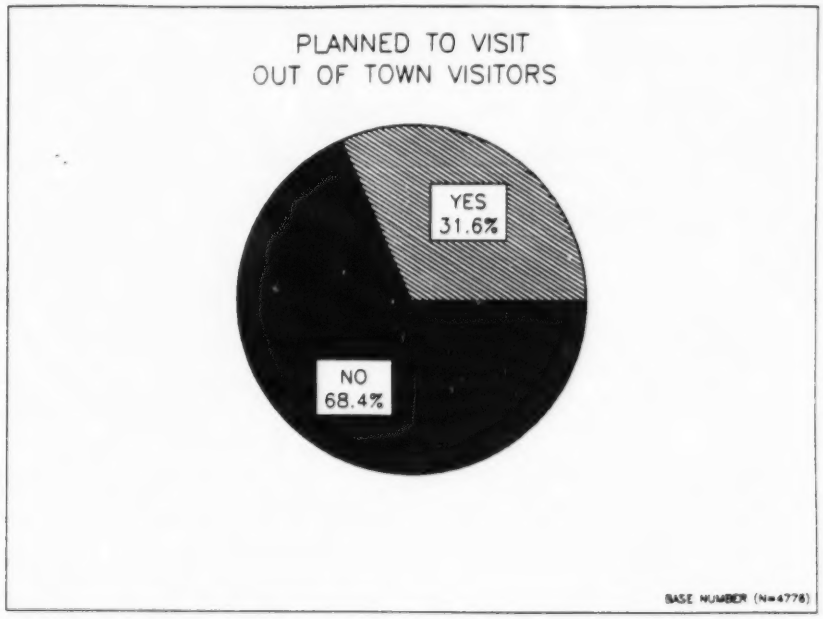



**FIGURE 45**

*FIGURE 46*




Most (68.4 %) out-of-town visitors did not plan to visit York Redoubt when planning their vacation. Approximately 66 per cent of Nova Scotia visitors (non-local) planned to visit York Redout compared to 19 per cent for other Canadian and 36.8 per cent for American origins.

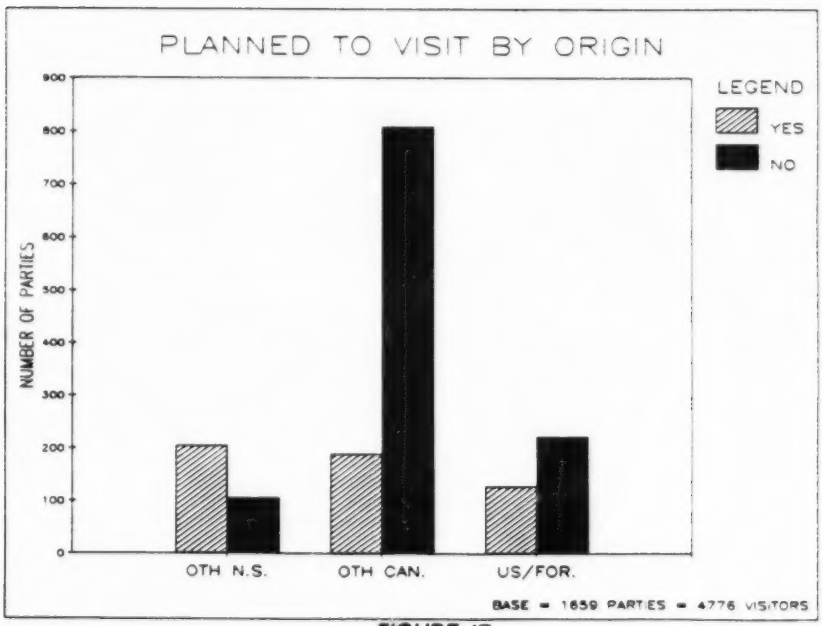



*FIGURE 47*

*FIGURE 48*

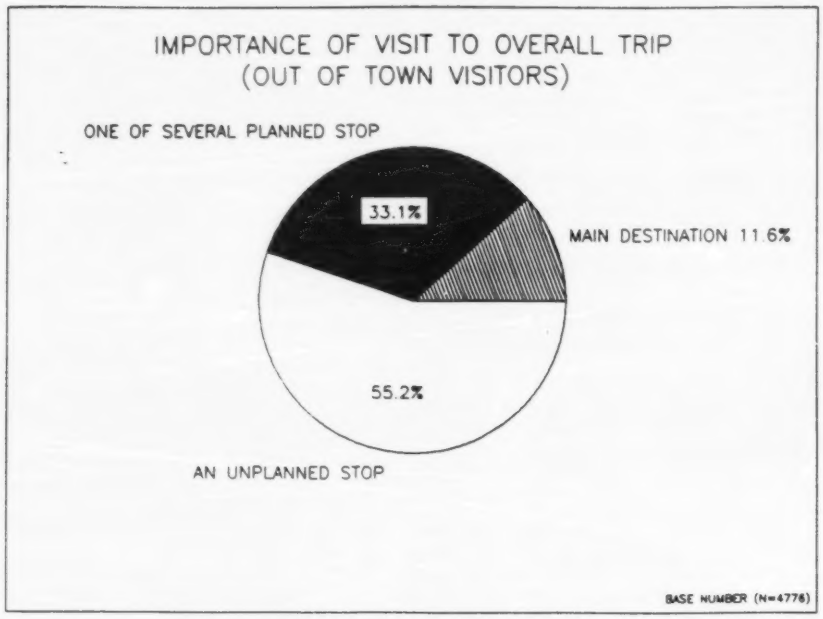



Figure 48 shows that for the majority (88.3 %) of out-of-town visitors York Redoubt was not the main destination. Figure 49 shows the length of stay for the entire visitor population to York Redoubt. The average length of stay was 66 minutes with two distinct nodes; those staying between 15 and 30 minutes and those staying between 45 and 90 minutes.

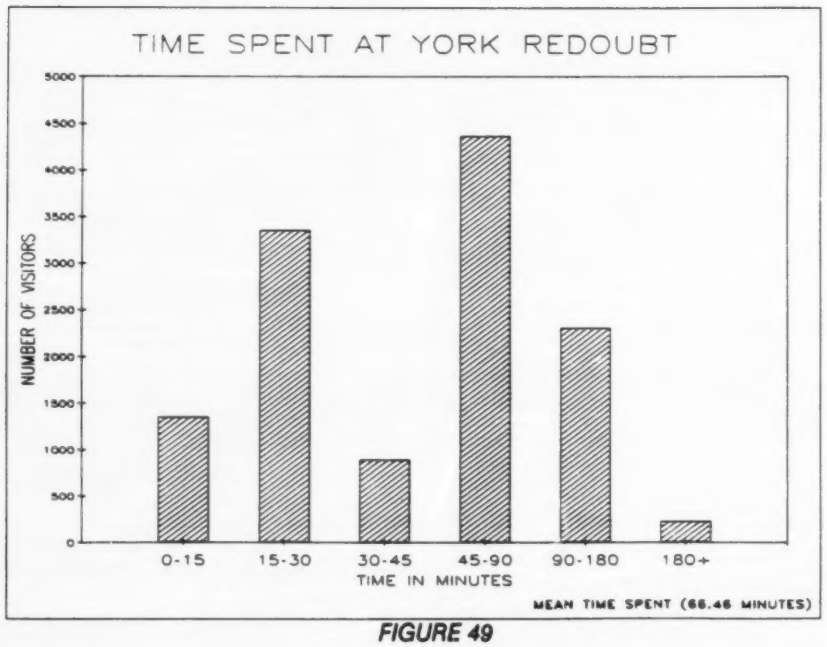
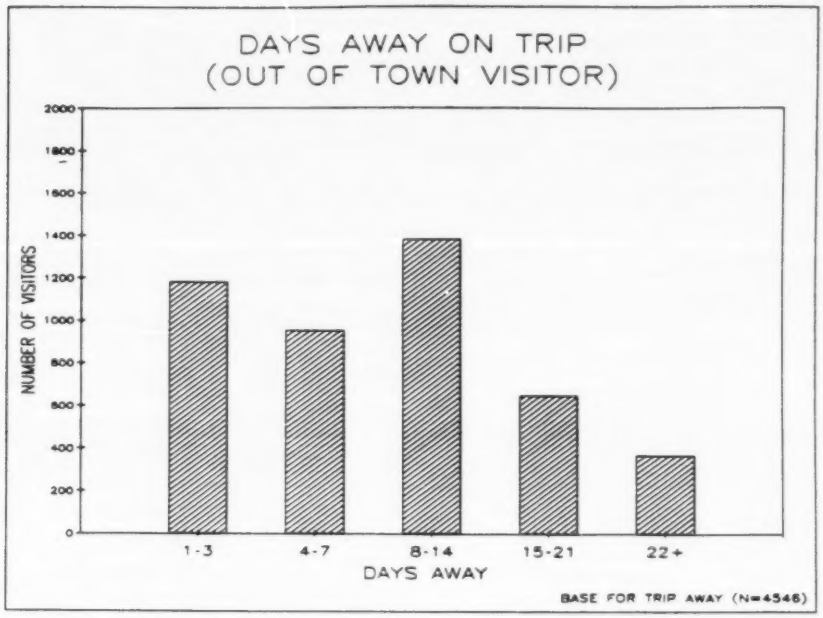



*FIGURE 49*

*FIGURE 50*




Nova Scotian (non-local) visitors had an average trip length of 1.7 days. Other Canadian visitors were away from home 12.3 days while Americans were away from home 16.8 days on average. Nova Scotian visitors to York Redoubt spent an average of 1.5 days in Halifax. This compares to 5.6 days in Halifax for other Canadian and 6 days for American visitors to York Redoubt.

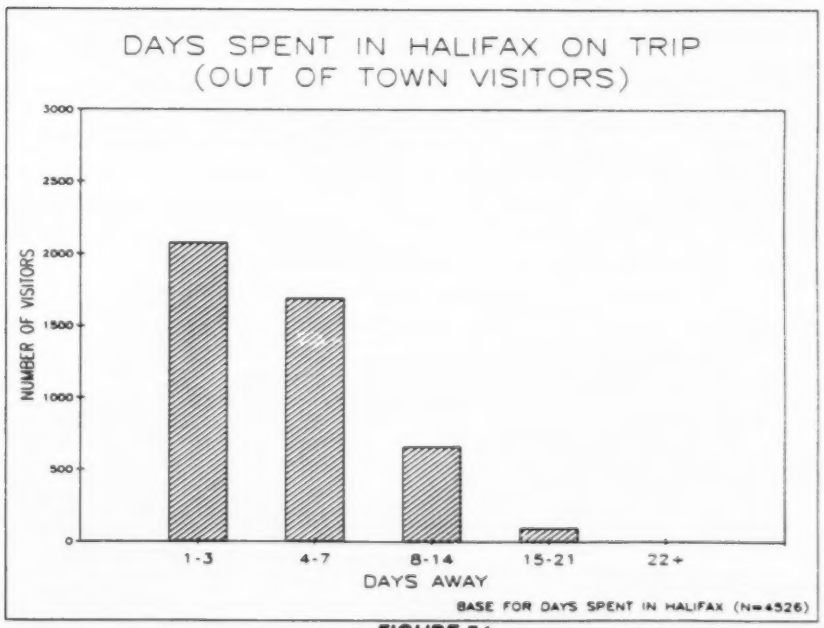
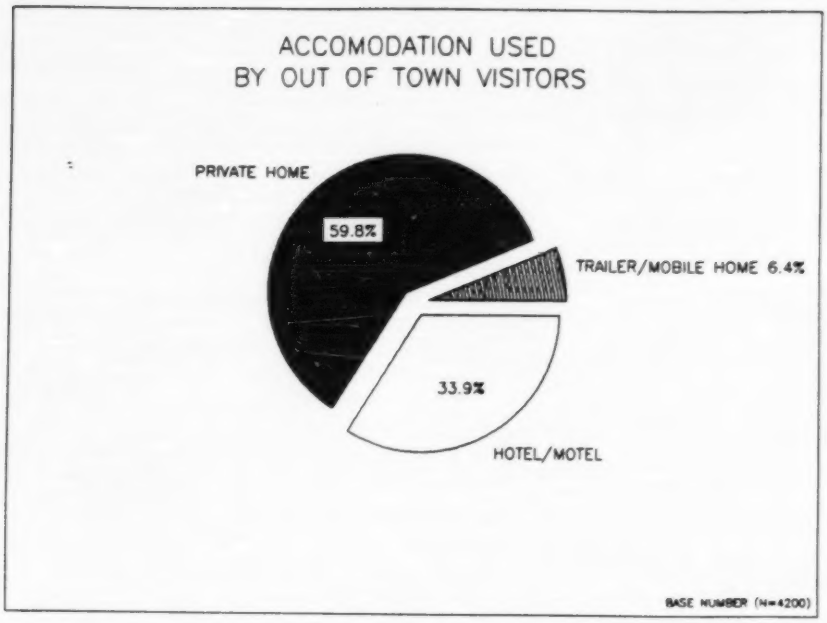


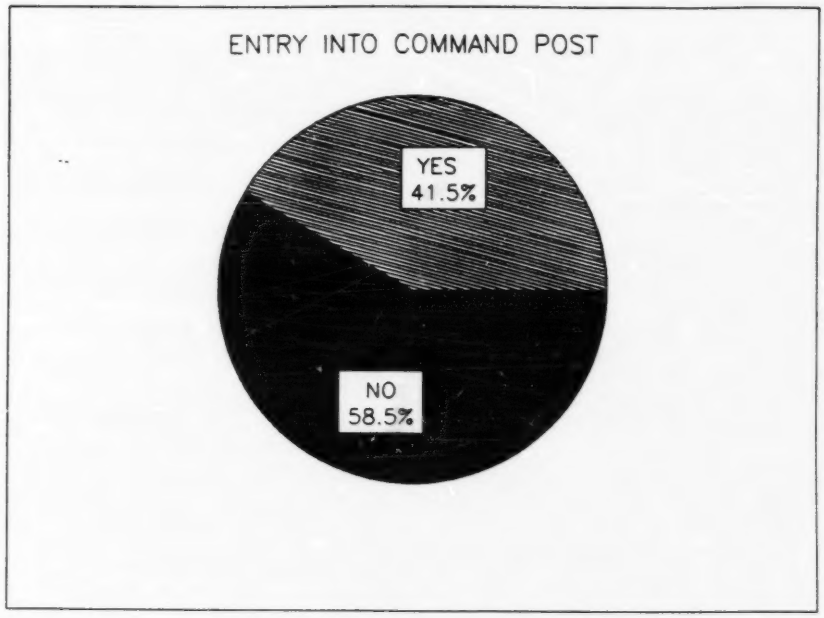

*FIGURE 51*

***FIGURE 52***




Almost 60 per cent of the out of town visitors to York Redout stayed with friends and relatives. Those staying with friends and relatives stayed an average of 6.5 nights in Halifax. Hotel users (33.9 %) stayed an average of 3.9 nights in Halifax while campers stayed an average of 2.6 nights.

*FIGURE 53*




Less than half (41.5 %) of the visitors to York Redoubt entered the command post. Of those who did not enter the building almost 30 percent thought it looked closed and 21 per cent had been before. Another 27 per cent were either not interested or did not have time.

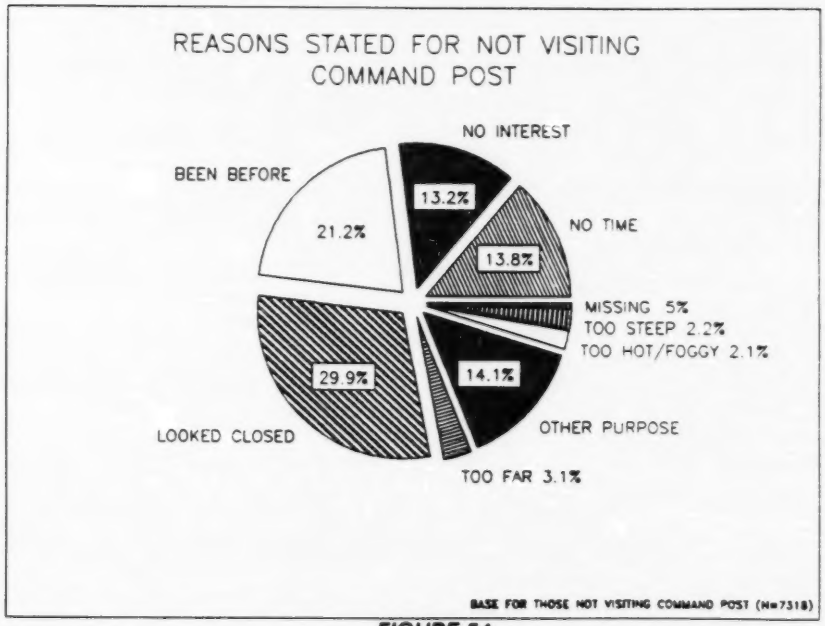
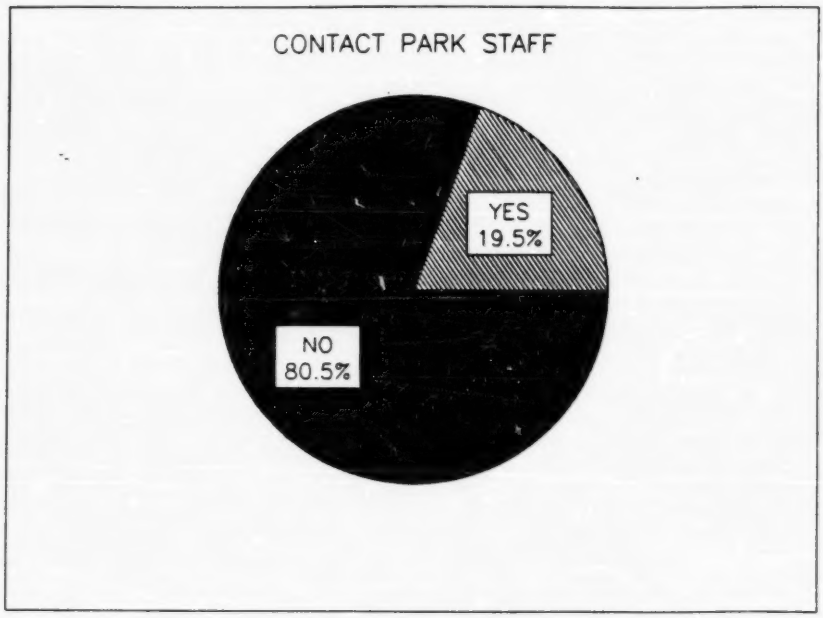



*FIGURE 54*

*FIGURE 55*




**Approximately 20 per cent of the visitors to York Redoubt had contact with park staff. The fact that this percentage is low is not surprising given the high level of repeat visitation and the volume of local visitation.**

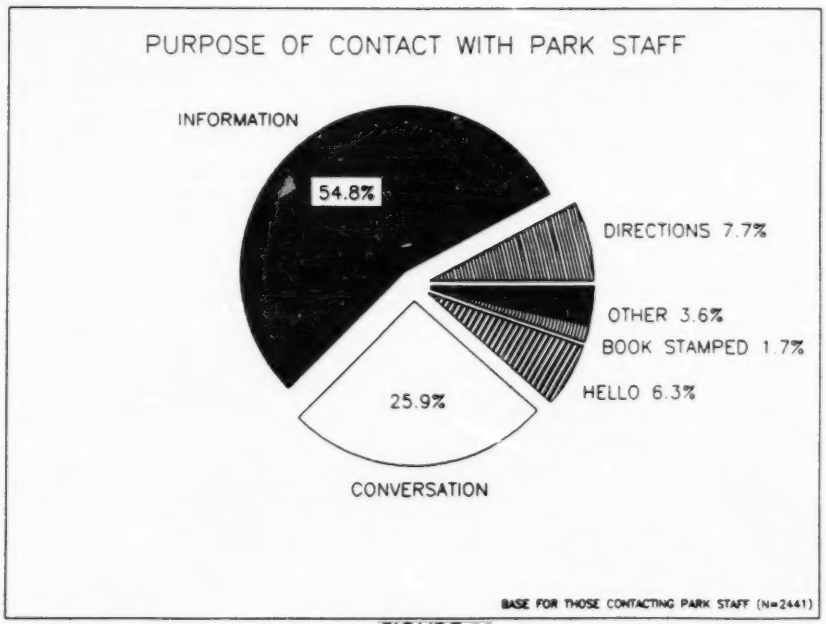
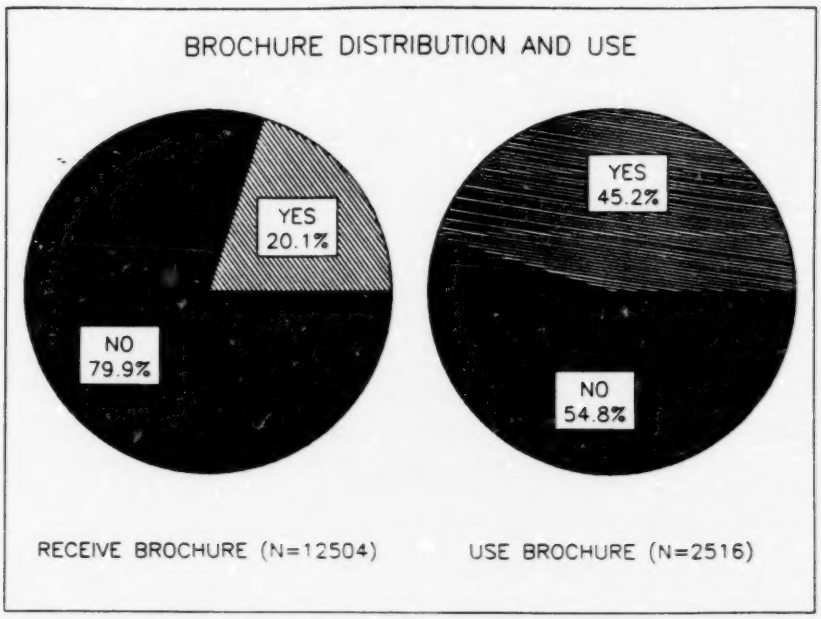



*FIGURE 56*

**FIGURE 57**



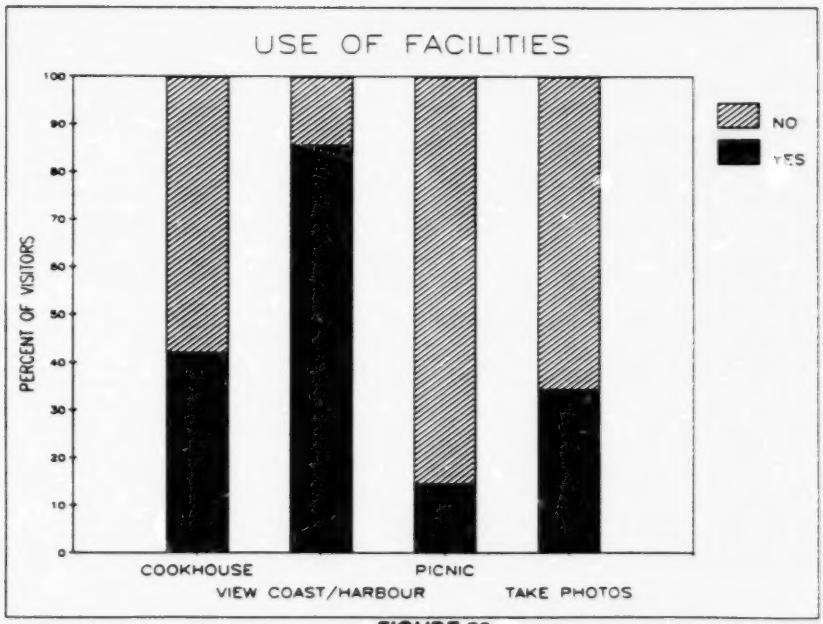
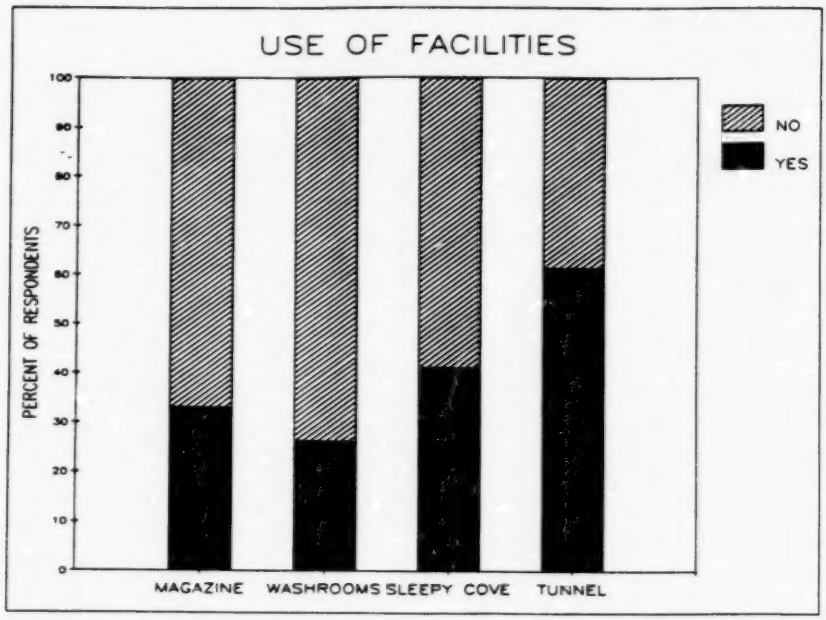




**FIGURE 58**

*FIGURE 59*




Figures 58 and 59 show the use of the parks facilities in terms of percentage of visitors. The two most popular activities are viewing the coast and harbour and exploring the tunnels.

# YORK REDOUBT

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **NO COMMENTS** | 72 |
| **FAVOURABLE COMMENTS** | |
| Good As Is | 123 |
| Nice and Clean | 3 |
| Better Than It Used To Be | 1 |
| **FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS** | |
| More Restoration Required | 36 |
| Food Outlet Required | 30 |
| Open Tunnels | 20 |
| Water Taps Needed | 15 |
| Fix Wall | 13 |
| Improve Paths | 11 |
| Telescopes To Allow View of Harbour | 8 |
| Benches | 8 |
| More Picnic Areas | 8 |

| | |
|---|---|
| More Stairs Going Up Hills | 7 |
| More Picnic Tables and Benches Sleepy Cove | 6 |
| Cut Grass | 5 |
| Fix Washrooms | 5 |
| Fix Phone | 4 |
| Bar-B-Ques | 4 |
| People in Period Costumes | 3 |
| More Garbage Cans | 3 |
| More Exhibits | 3 |
| Lens in Telescope Needs Repairing | 3 |
| More WWII Relics | 3 |
| Water Taps in Picnic Area | 2 |
| Water Fountain Needed at Beach | 2 |
| More Plants and Trees Around Parking Lot | 2 |
| Pave Parking Lot | 2 |
| Facilities for Handicapped | 2 |
| Picnic Tables by Parking Lot | 2 |
| Pave Road to Command Post | 1 |
| Access to Walk on Wall | 1 |
| Walking Tours | 1 |
| Washrooms Down by Water | 1 |
| Build Shelter Around Bus Stop | 1 |
| Handrails In Steep Areas | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Fix Rail in Command Post | 1 |
| More Things for Kids to Do | 1 |

**INFORMATION/COMMUNICATION**

| | |
|---|---|
| Signs Needed | 59 |
| Advertising Needed | 56 |
| More Information Needed | 33 |
| More Guides Should be Present | 9 |
| Open Longer than Summer Months | 8 |
| Information Booth Closer to Parking Lot | 4 |
| Map at Entrance | 3 |
| Place Arrows on Map in Brochure | 1 |